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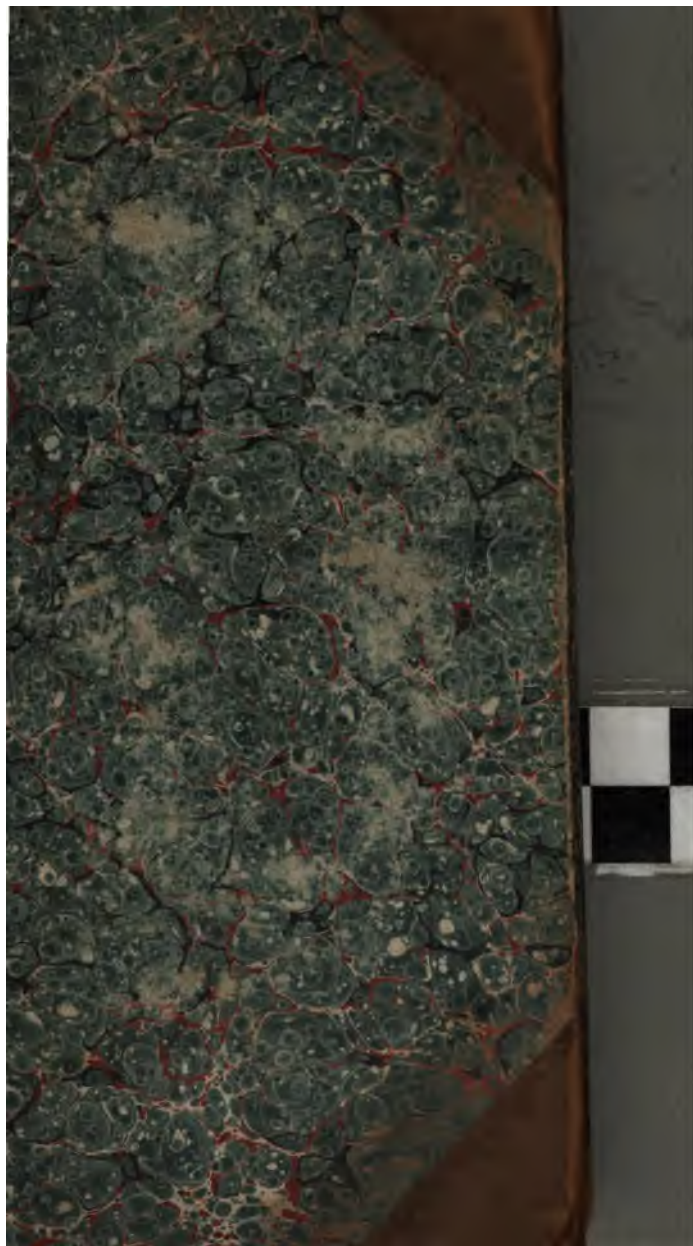
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THE
HISTORY OF SCOTLAND,

FROM

THE EARLIEST PERIOD TO THE PRESENT TIME.

BY ROBERT CHAMBERS,
AUTHOR OF THE "PICTURE OF SCOTLAND," &c.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

LONDON:
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1832.

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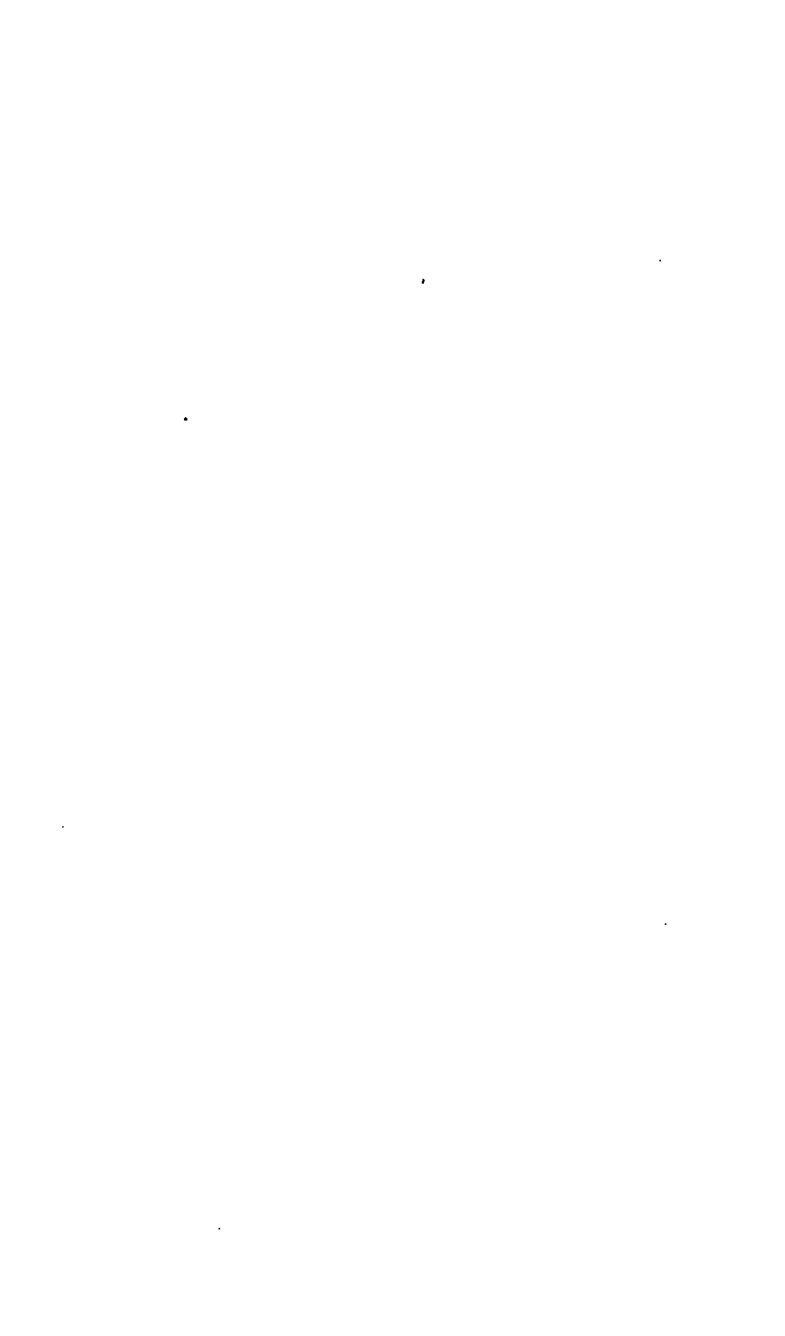
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ADVERTISEMENT.

IN the following pages an attempt is made to confer upon a concise Scottish history the benefit of a more extensive and minute inquiry into that subject, than most of the writers of such works can have had an opportunity of making. The writer perhaps owes some apology for entering a field so recently occupied by his illustrious senior Sir Walter Scott; but he trusts that the distinct nature and the different extent of his Work will plead his excuse.

Edinburgh, October, 1832.



HISTORY OF SCOTLAND.

CHAPTER I.

EARLY AGES—ALEXANDER III.

It is probable, from the insular situation of Britain, and its being placed at the very extremity of the elder continent, almost cut off from all the rest of the world, as Virgil expresses it,* that it remained, for many ages previous to the Christian era, in the same condition in which some of the remote isles of America were found by their first discoverers—without inhabitants, without even wild animals, a mere wilderness of vegetation. For countless centuries, that land which has since been trod by so many millions, lay unseen, unnamed, unenjoyed; in vain alike the foliage of its far-spread forests, and the deep herbage of its valleys; in vain the flow of its majestic streams, and the bloom of the flowers which bent over them in uncropped luxuriance; in vain the summer's heat and winter's cold, or any other of those dispensations which Providence intended from the birth of time for the comfort and

“*Penitus toto divisos orbe Britannos.*”—*Ec. I.*

convenience of the human race ; all lying in primeval silence—nature waiting for man.

From what quarter man came, to break the silence that had continued from chaos, to awaken untried echoes, wade through nameless rivers, and disturb with his artificial ideas the vegetation which had been blooming and bourgeoning since the Deluge, is uncertain ; though it was probably from the neighbouring shores of Gaul, now France. The first enlightened man who set his foot upon the country was Julius Cæsar. When he invaded the southern shore of the island, fifty-five years before Christ, he found it occupied by barbarians similar to those whom he had just subdued in Gaul. The Roman republic was then pursuing a course of conquest and colonization over the barbarous parts of the earth, much the same as what it has since become the turn of Great Britain to pursue ; and accordingly, we find the island and its inhabitants spoken of by the classic writers of that nation in nearly the same style as we might use in regard to the Hindoos, or the North American Indians, over whom the British arms have latterly been extending their conquests.

The Romans continued about five hundred years, in Britain ; during which they succeeded in subduing and civilizing the greater part of it, the only exception being the more northerly part of that section of the island which has since come to bear the name of Scotland. There they found it impossible to penetrate, owing to the irregular nature of the ground, and the indomitable character of the natives. These *people* were termed Caledonians, from a word in their

own language, signifying dwellers in the woods—for their whole country was a forest, and their only subsistence the wild creatures who found in it a common shelter with themselves; thence a district of the south of Scotland is still called Kyle, meaning a woody region. The Romans, who never measured danger or trouble against the probable profit, made repeated attempts to conquer or extirpate this wretched nation of savages, by leading roads into their territory and planting forts; but they were always obliged, in the end, to retreat behind a fortified wall, which one of the emperors, in the second century of the Christian era, had thought proper to build across the island, as a means, if not of subjugating the Caledonians, at least of preventing them from doing any harm beyond their own bounds.

At length, in the fifth century, the Romans were compelled by distresses in their own country to withdraw from Britain; and the Caledonians were left to enjoy a negative kind of triumph. The wall being then undefended, the barbarians broke through it, and spread themselves over the country to the south, which had been left in possession of a partially civilized, but also effeminate race of people, namely, the original Britons as modified by several centuries of intercourse with the Roman legions. That race found it necessary for their own defence, to call in the assistance of the Angles or Saxons, a warlike people of Germany. The Angles soon beat back the Caledonians to their original limits; but, by way of reward for so doing, they established themselves in the same

kind of mastery over the Britons which the Romans had enjoyed ; and it is from them that England derives its name.

In those early ages, before any proper system of government or law was established, there were always some bands of adventurous people wandering about, who were ready either to sell their services as soldiers to any nation oppressed by another, or, as occasion served, to become the oppressors themselves, and sit down as the military lords of a soil heretofore occupied by a peaceful race. Of this kind were the Scots, a tribe which, after emigrating, as is supposed, from Spain to Ireland, and after having made themselves paramount in the latter country, sent a detachment over to Caledonia, under the charge of a chief named Fergus, to try if a settlement might be effected there. Fergus, styled the son of Eric, landed, with his troops, on the point of Kintyre in Argyleshire, about the year 503 ; and immediately began, from his first seat of government, on a lonely peninsula, to extend his dominion into the country. His bands increased ; his family continued, after his own death, as their chiefs ; a castle, called Dunstaffnage, near the mouth of the present Caledonian canal, became the palace of his race, and the capital of the country upon which they aggressed. By and by, the Caledonians, who bore the various name of Picts, and who had, in the course of ages, become at least so much civilized as to erect buildings and carve sculptures of no inconsiderable elegance (some of which yet exist), entered into a furious struggle with the Scots, and were by

them overcome. A Scottish king, named Kenneth, accomplished this work in the year 853, and brought forward his seat of government from Dunstaffnage to Forteviot, in Perthshire, which is supposed to have previously been the capital of the Pictish sovereign, Druet, whom he had subdued.

A space of three hundred and fifty years having thus sufficed for giving the Scots possession of the country north of the Tay, another century saw them advance to the Forth, and prepare to overcome certain tribes of Britons, which still subsisted, in more or less independence, to the south of that estuary. A successor of Kenneth, named Malcolm (1020), obtained dominion over a great part of this tract, by treaty with Edmund, a Saxon King of England, the condition being that he should become an ally of that state. And not only did the Scottish princes thus extend their sway; they also resisted, with a gallantry which puts the conduct of the English to shame, the invasions repeatedly attempted upon their country by the Danes, who in this age exhibited the same genius for maritime conquest which the Scots and Saxons, and afterwards the Normans, displayed by land. Kenneth III. son of Malcolm, gained a memorable victory over a prodigious band of these invaders, at Luncarty, near Perth. Other victories were also obtained over them, at Aberlemno in Angus, Mortlach in Aberdeenshire, and at Fores in Moray. Nevertheless, it is certain, from the dialect and personal appearance of the inhabitants of these districts, that great numbers of maritime invaders, from the countries in the north of Eu-

rope, had gained a settlement in them before or after the period in question.

It would be quite vain to record, even in a work of greater space than the present, the particular contests which took place in these early ages of Scottish history. The object of such encounters is generally too mean and obscure, too much removed from our sympathies, to admit of any interest being excited by their detail. Some feeling, however, may be excited by the idea which arises in our minds, in reflecting on the number of those conflicts, indicated by the frequency of rude barrows and obelisks throughout the country; and on their bloodiness, which is testified, with scarcely less authority, by tradition. It is impossible to think on such struggles, inspired, as they were, either by a wish for empire over the most sterile regions, or by a love of glory, which had not even the chance of being commemorated, without a sensation of pity for misdirected human nature.

That these ages could produce their tales of ambition, and other violent passions, as well as times of later date, is proved by the well-known story of Macbeth. The real tale of that chief is, that, having a claim upon the crown, which a peculiarly loose law of succession then in force, might have easily persuaded him to be superior to the right of the existing sovereign, Duncan, he waylaid and murdered that personage, near Elgin in Moray, and then became king himself. To this deed, as old chronicles tell, he was partly incited by a vision of three Sybil-like women, *who foretold his greatness*. But his chief inspiration

is supposed to have been the baleful passions of his wife Gruoch, who had family quarrels of long standing to avenge upon Duncan. Macbeth, having committed one crime, was easily led to perpetrate others. He expelled the children of the murdered King, and also a chief named Macduff, who befriended them. The family of the last mentioned individual he is said to have burnt in their castle. He latterly became a grievous oppressor of his subjects, by compelling them to work like beasts of burden in fortifying a hill near Perth, called Dunsinane, for the defence of his person and ill-gotten power. At length, Malcolm, the son of Duncan, procured aid from England, met, and overthrew the usurper.

This Malcolm, the third of the name, and styled *Canmore*, from his large head, was the first sovereign of a new and comparatively enlightened era of Scottish history. He established his seat of government at Dunfermline, in a lowland part of the country, and endeavoured to consolidate the sovereignty which had been procured by his predecessor Malcolm II. over Lothian, Berwickshire, and even some of the northern parts of England. He received and gave shelter to Edgar Atheling, the Saxon prince, and his sister Margaret, who fled from England in consequence of the usurpation of Harold. That Princess he afterwards took to wife, and thereby transmitted to his posterity the claims of the Saxon line of sovereigns upon the throne of England. This lady, being very pious and well-informed, was able to do much good in humanizing the King and his subjects.

They were soon after provided with additional means of instruction and improvement by the arrival of a great number of other Saxons, who left England in consequence of the Norman conquest. The language of the King and court had hitherto been Celtic, or Gaelic, like their lineage; but they now began to learn the Anglo-Saxon. Afterwards the court language, and that indeed which eventually spread over all the lowland part of Scotland, received a tinge of French from a number of Normans, who deserted William's standard and took refuge in the northern kingdom. From this period it is observable that the Scottish princes lose sight of those kilted regions in the west and north which their ancestors first overran, and assume the chivalrous aspect and bearing of Norman Kings.

Malcolm died in 1093, sovereign of even more country than is now contained in Scotland; and the crown, after vacillating for some years between Donald Bane, an usurper, and the elder branches of his family, settled upon his son David, a pious, bold, and sagacious prince, who held it with great credit for twenty-nine years; that is, from the year 1124 to 1153. Malcolm's daughter, having in the meantime been married to Henry I. the youngest son of the Conqueror, had given birth to Maud, mother of the English monarch Henry II.; and thus a connection was established between the Plantagenet princes and the Scottish monarchs, which was little interrupted for two centuries, though in the first place it caused David *to be embroiled* in a war with King Stephen, for the

vindication of his niece's rights against that usurper. David's piety, mingled, no doubt, with motives of a political nature, caused him to make large endowments to the church, and to build many religious houses. The monasteries of Kelso, Dryburgh, and Melrose, which run like a chain of military posts along the border, together with many equally splendid foundations in the more central parts of the kingdom, were raised by him.*

To David succeeded his grandson, Malcolm IV. who reigned till 1166. To Malcolm, who died without issue, succeeded William, another grandson of King David. William was a thoroughly chivalrous King, and seems to have been the first of his race who

* His successor, James I. on being shown his grave at Dunfermline, and told by the monks what a saint he had been, remarked that he had been "ane sair sanct for the crowne;" that is, had made great havoc of the crown-lands for the gratification of his piety. But, whatever may be thought of the abstract propriety of spending large sums for the maintainance of a body of clergy, it is evident that to do so in the age and country under review, was just to rescue so much land from the support of war for the support of religion, from the cause of barbarism to the cause of civilization. To find traces of even an extravagant religion in this early age of history, is gratifying: it brings pleasure analogous to what was experienced by the mariner shipwrecked on an unknown coast, who, soon after seeing a gibbet, and a man hanging from it, argued, with great thankfulness of spirit, that he was in a civilized country.*

* The first religion in Scotland, as in England, was Druidical; afterwards some Christian missionary introduced a milder worship, and for some centuries a clergy, under the name of Culdees, and not condemned to celibacy, were the ministers of religion. The church of Rome, for the first time, established its dominion over Scotland in 1188.

adopted a heraldic ensign. His badge was the lion, which has ever since figured in the Scottish shield; and hence he was named William the Lion. Once, when reconnoitring the castle of Alnwick, in England, for the purpose of taking it, he was surprised by a superior party of English, who had approached him under a mist. Not at all daunted, he dashed with his little band against the enemy, crying, "Now we shall see who are good knights!" an exclamation savouring highly of chivalry. On this occasion he was taken prisoner, and brought before the English King, Henry II. against whom he had taken up arms at the instigation of his son Richard, afterwards known by the epithet, Cœur de Lion.

From this accident flowed a grievous national misfortune. The Kings of England had hitherto received homage from the Scottish monarchs for some of those southern districts which the former had found it convenient to cede to the latter in the time of Malcolm II. By and by, as the original principles of this arrangement became less plainly understood, the English Kings began to form the ambitious wish of establishing a claim of paramountcy over those of Scotland for their *entire* dominions; thereby degrading them to the condition of mere vassal Kings, or Viceroys. The impudence of this project is the more conspicuous, when we consider that Henry II. was only the great-grandson of a Norman adventurer of illegitimate birth, while William was the descendant of a race which had given independent kings to Scotland for six or seven hundred years. Absurd and im-

prudent as it was, it was destined to be so far successful in the present case, that William, for the sake of his liberty, was content to pay fealty to Henry for his whole dominions. Hence proceeded evils manifold to Scotland.

William died in 1214, after a reign of forty-eight years, in which there is hardly a blot except this inauspicious acknowledgment, which, after all, the monarch probably contemplated only as a thing paid in ransom instead of money, and which might afterwards be redeemed for a pecuniary consideration. Such a redemption did virtually take place some years after, when, for a certain sum, which he wanted for the Holy Wars, Richard Cœur de Lion remitted the obligation imposed by his father, reserving only the usual homage for Lothian and other southern districts.

To William succeeded his son Alexander, the second son of that name, who was a prudent prince, and did much to consolidate the kingdom. To him, in 1249, succeeded his son Alexander III. who also turned out a good sovereign. The reign of the latter is particularly distinguished by a victory which he gained over the Norwegians in 1263, when Haco, the warlike king of that country, made a formidable descent at Largs, in Ayrshire, for the purpose of enforcing his right to the sovereignty of the western islands. Alexander contended with the invaders for three days, and at length, with the assistance of a storm which partly destroyed their fleet, succeeded in repelling the attack.

Scotland had now experienced two centuries of

good, and, upon the whole, peaceful government, since it was first extended to its full size; and it is said to have been for a while not much inferior to England in power, commerce, wealth, or, what is perhaps the only just criterion of the rank of nations, worth of national character. Much of this was owing to its line of kings, who, in general, appear to have been men of highly estimable character—fully equal to the contemporary race of Plantagenet, and certainly much superior to the succeeding dynasty of Stuart. Perhaps few of the royal families of modern Europe display six generations of such uniform respectability as those which occur in the Scottish line between Malcolm Canmore and Alexander III. Much of the prosperity of the kingdom must have also been owing to the genius of the people, who seem to have been greatly improved by the strangers that were perpetually mixing with them. Among external causes, is to be reckoned the perpetual drainage which England experienced during these ages for the Holy Wars, while Scotland was constantly nourishing its strength at home.

In this era of Scottish history we first find coined silver money. Now also arose the first of those institutions called royal burghs, which were originally intended by the kings as forts of refuge, so to speak, for the common people, where they might carry on their trades, and enjoy a local government of their own, free from the barons and great noblemen who ruled over the rest of the country. The commercial shipping of *Scotland* during this period was considerable; the

country itself presented such temptations to the enterprise of foreign merchants, that the Jews proposed to form a colony at North Queensferry for the purpose of carrying on trade. At this time the King was in the habit of calling parliaments of his nobles, who sometimes contributed large sums of money for his use. The several monarchs also had their seals, wherewith to ratify the charters which they bestowed upon their vassals. These seals generally represent the royal personages either on horseback, arrayed as knights, or in their chairs of state, robed and crowned as kings. There were palaces at Dunfermline, at Edinburgh Castle, and probably at other places. The nobles, a great number of whom were Norman refugees, or Normans who also had lands in England, lived in fortresses or castles, some of which, such as Dunbar, Tantallon, Lochmaben, and Carlawerock, were very massive and strong. The tradesmen of the burghs lived in their *tenements of land*, which were generally of two stories in height. The peasantry and farmers dwelt in hovels, probably little worse than what obtained till lately all over the country, and which are still found in Aberdeenshire and the Highlands. At the same time, a complete system of religious instruction was established under twelve bishops, each of whom had an extensive catalogue of parsonages committed to his charge. The monasteries were already very numerous, and very rich; the buildings beautiful and the lands highly cultivated. The arts had also made some progress over the country—though it is not probable that Scotland exported any *manufactured articles*.

The monarchs, during this period, appear to have shaken off a great deal of their original Celtic character, and become almost entirely Norman in manners and style of government. When Fergus invaded the country in 503, he brought with him a flat black stone like a cushion, which had been, even for ages before his time, a kind of family palladium ; a destiny was attached to it, according to tradition, that wherever it should be placed, there should the race of Scots be predominant. Perhaps the sacred object had been carried with the tribe through Ireland, and might be afterwards committed to the charge of Fergus, as a means of procuring success to his expedition. On this the Scottish kings had always been placed at their coronation. Another Celtic ceremonial was gone through on such occasions. A Highland senachy, or herald, appeared before the new king, and recited his genealogy back to the time of Fergus, by way of showing his right to the throne. But scarcely any other trace is to be found of Celtic peculiarity in these monarchs. It is farther evident that the late distinct division of the country into Highlands and Lowlands had now commenced ; the former giving shelter to the original Celtic subjects of the race of Fergus, while the latter were occupied by those mixed races over which the kings had established their supremacy. Hence the language of the former is still pure Erse or Celtic, while that of the lower region is a mingled dialect of Anglo-Saxon, Scandinavian, and Norman, with a sprinkling of Gaelic. It may also be *observed, as part of the same result, that the names of*

places in the western and northern division of the kingdom are generally of Gaelic signification, while those in the eastern and southern districts are more generally Scandinavian and Saxon.

Upon the whole, the institutions of the country were a good deal like the English, through whom it may be said the light of modern civilization, which arose after the middle ages in Italy, France, and Spain, had been regularly distilled before it reached the Scottish nation. The country was divided into sheriffdoms, after the fashion of Alfred's dissection of England into counties; and some noblemen, generally of Norman descent, had the principal sway over each. Almost all of these grandees were styled from the districts which they ruled, as the Earl of Mar, the Earl of Stratherne, the Earl of Lennox, and so forth; the title 'Earl' being, in reality, descriptive of an office similar to that of a modern sheriff. The towns appear to have had bayliffs, or bailies, as their chief magistrates. The laws were administered by the King in person, who, for that purpose, was perpetually moving through his kingdom, holding what were called justice-ayres. The feudal system, by which all lands are understood to be held from the king, on condition of military service, and by virtue of which landlords in their turn had unlimited power over their tenants, was, in this period, introduced in its fullest forms into Scotland, where it has ever since exercised a prodigious influence over society.

CHAPTER II.

PERIOD OF WALLACE AND BRUCE.

AT the death of Alexander III. in 1285, the advancing prosperity of Scotland was destined to experience a grievous check, from the unhappy results of a disputed succession.

Alexander left no heirs but an infant grand-child, Margaret Princess of Norway, the daughter, to wit, of Eric, King of that country, by Margaret, daughter of the King of Scotland. This child, who had been acknowledged heir of the crown the year before, now therefore became Queen of Scotland. As she was still in Norway, and only three years of age, a regency of six persons was appointed to rule in her stead ; and negotiations were entered into with Eric, her father, and Edward I. of England, who was her grandmother's brother, for bringing her over to Scotland.

Edward I. was at this time by far the most warlike and sagacious sovereign in Europe. He had already added Wales to his native dominions, and he now formed the project of gaining possession of Scotland also, by matching his son with the infant Queen. A union of the two countries by such means was highly *desirable* ; but, on the unexpected death of Margaret,

in her passage from Norway, Edward was induced to form views of a much darker kind.

The inheritance of the kingdom now lay among the descendants of Prince David, a brother of William the Lion. From the eldest of David's three daughters descended John Baliol, a Norman noble, holding great possessions in Scotland, England, and France. From the second descended Robert Bruce, Earl of Carrick, also a Norman noble, and, like Baliol, possessed of large estates in England. According to all modern ideas of succession, Baliol's right was preferable to Bruce's, and he ought at once to have become king. Unfortunately, however, there had obtained in Scotland, though not since the time of Malcolm Canmore, a custom by which a brother or nephew might succeed, in preference to a son or a daughter, if he only were more fully grown in years, and more able to lead the national armies. In virtue of this, Bruce had plotted a usurpation of the throne, even in the life-time of the infant Margaret; he now argued, that, as he was the grandson of Prince David, while John Baliol was his great-grandson, he was better entitled to the throne; being, to use the phrase of the times, nearer in degree to the person from whom they drew their common descent.

To settle this puzzling question, King Edward presented himself; and as the people were anxious to avoid a civil broil, they were easily induced to accept of him as arbiter. Before giving his award, however, the wily king required that the competitors should acknowledge him to be Lord Paramount of Scotland,

and that the kingdom should be put into his hands, by the effectual symbol of a surrender of its best fortresses, in order that he might, in turn, give it to the rightful heir. This was a revival of the claim of superiority, which, as already mentioned, the English monarchs affected to have over those of Scotland, in consequence of the latter, for some ages back, having rendered homage for the English provinces entrusted to their keeping. Such a claim had often been presented by the kings of England in treaties; but, except in the solitary case of William the Lion, it had always been scouted by the northern monarchs. The only reasonable grounds upon which it can now be set forward, are, that certainly it was fractionally right, namely, so far as a part of the south of Scotland was concerned; that, in several instances, expatriated Scottish princes had sought and procured aid from the kings of England, as their superiors, in attempts to regain their throne; and that a great part of the Scottish nobility were actually subjects of England, from the circumstance of their also holding lands in that kingdom. On the present occasion, as the competitors were all subjects of Edward, and as they were all alike glad to bow to the arbiter who alone seemed to have the power of bestowing the kingdom, they readily acknowledged his claim, even in its most sweeping sense.

Edward, thus empowered, awarded the crown to John Baliol, who forthwith went through the ceremonial of swearing fealty to his patron, and was soon after crowned at Scone. Ere long, however, he felt

the smart of the obligation under which he had come to Edward. That stern master began to inflict upon him a series of insults, for the express purpose, it would appear, of causing him to fly into rebellion. For one thing, he required the poor slave-king to appear before his English law-courts, to answer to every appeal which his own subjects thought proper to carry there. Even the most stupid and slavish animals are found to kick at last; and so did John Baliol. He gratified Edward by sending him a solemn renunciation of his allegiance. When the English king received it, he exclaimed, in his Norman French, "*Ha! ce fol felon, tel folie feict! S'il ne vult venir à nous, nous viendrons à lui.*" (Ha! the foolish traitor! If he will not come to me, I shall go to him.) And he immediately invaded Scotland with an army, which, after destroying Berwick, then a Scottish town, overthrew the whole collected force of the country, at Dunbar, April 28, 1296. King John, then left quite defenceless, was taken prisoner; and being brought before Edward, in the church-yard of Strickathro, in the Mearns, was there, in solemn manner, stripped piecemeal of the ensigns and robes of sovereignty, and declared to be no longer king of Scotland. His person was soon after committed to the keeping of the Pope.

It might have been expected, as Scotland was now without a sovereign, that Edward would lose no time in appointing the next competitor. Bruce accordingly presented his claim for the seat vacated by Baliol. "What!" exclaimed the Lord Paramount, "have I nothing to do but to conquer kingdoms for you?"

No such thing was contemplated by the haughty Plantagenet. The time was now come for what he had all along looked forward to—his making himself the sovereign of Scotland. He therefore only stayed to assure himself of the complete subjugation of the country, before leaving it in the hands of his own troops, and his own civil officers, to be managed as a part of the English dominions. He marched back to London,* congratulating himself that within a very few years he had added two independent nations to the catalogue of his subjects, and extended his empire over the whole island of Britain.

It is to be observed, however, that he had only subdued the bodies of men. Their spirits he had not even broken. The classes, moreover, which appeared to render him their obedience, were chiefly those Normans who were in a great measure his own subjects already, or who at least had a national feeling rather in favour of England than of Scotland. The mass of the population, composed of old independent aborigines, who loathed a foreign sway, and reflected with ardent feelings upon the antiquity of their own desecrated monarchy, had passed beneath his notice, and now only wanted a proper leader to rise against him.

That leader was supplied by William Wallace, a young gentleman of Renfrewshire, the second son of

* On this occasion he carried off the national records, and the stone upon which the Scottish kings had been crowned for so many centuries.

the knight of Elderslie, who, having been outlawed for killing an Englishman in a brawl, was gradually induced, by a train of circumstances, to commence a guerilla warfare against the English garrisons. Being successful in a few rencontres, he soon acquired strength, began to take castles, and to attack large parties; and finally, he appeared openly at the head of an army, for the avowed purpose of relieving his country from a foreign yoke. Wallace had all the proper characteristics of a popular hero. He was taller and stronger than most men; bravest among the brave; capable of enduring any degree of fatigue; and gifted with a turn for ambuscade, which often was of greater avail to him than the number of his troops. By Edward's directions the Earl of Surrey led an English army against this unexpected insurgent. Wallace waited on the north bank of the Forth for its approach. Half of it passed a narrow wooden bridge to give him battle. That portion he attacked; in an instant it fell into confusion, turned, and endeavoured to escape across the river. Great numbers were killed and drowned; those who yet remained on the south bank retreated to England. Having thus become in a manner master of Scotland, Wallace undertook an expedition into England, which the absence of Edward in France left at this moment in a defenceless state. He swept the country breadth-wise from Newcastle to Carlisle almost without resistance, and, as might be expected in a rude age, took a terrible revenge for the temporary oppression of his native land by the English. On his return he was chosen by his

followers, and no doubt with the good-will of the people at large, to be Guardian of Scotland in the name of the exiled John.

Edward was obliged by this sudden turn of affairs to quit a scene of splendid conquest in France, and return to preserve his native dominions. He next year (1298) led a fine army northward, and on the 22d of July met Wallace at Falkirk. After an obstinate engagement, in which it is believed the Scottish army would have been victorious but for the desertion of some of its most important leaders, he once more found himself master of Scotland. Wallace sunk back into obscurity, and was never again able to make head against the English monarch. He was, some years after, taken by the treachery of a friend, dragged to London, there tried as a traitor to the King of England, and, to the disgrace of Edward, put to death with manifold cruelties. His name has continued to be so fondly remembered by popular tradition in his own country, as to convey a vivid idea of the force of that national spirit to which it was his fortune to give direction for a time, and which, as will be found, was ultimately successful in retrieving the kingdom from the English domination.

Although Edward was once more paramount by the defeat of Wallace, and although no enemy could be more formidable, it might have been apparent to any competitor for the crown, who had otherwise the proper qualifications, that the spirit of the people yet afforded the means of rescuing the country. No such *attempt was made* for several years ; but in the year

1305, a person properly qualified appeared in Robert Bruce, Earl of Carrick, grandson of the rival of Baliol. This person, next to Baliol and his son, who still lived, had the best pretensions to the crown. He was as yet little above thirty years of age, of a robust frame, and a dauntless, persevering character. He had for several years joined with the greater part of the other Norman grandees in fealty to Edward, and indeed seemed one of that sovereign's most tried and faithful followers. All at once, he appeared in the character of an insurgent against Edward's sovereign rule ; his first act in that capacity being the assassination of a rival named John Cumin, at the altar of a monastery in Dumfries. His project was partly the result, perhaps, of suddenly-conceived ambitious views, and of desperation on account of this crime. But, from whatever cause, he soon displayed an energy in his undertaking that was well calculated to renew the alarms of Edward for his Scottish conquest.

Bruce, in the vicissitudes and perils of his career, was just an aristocratic Wallace, a titled follower of the example of that illustrious commoner, having in view rather his own aggrandisement, or the vindication of his birth-right, than the assertion of his country's independence ; while the latter object alone—alone in pure and noble solitariness—appears to have been the aim of Wallace. Bruce's cause, however, was more apt than that of Wallace to gain friends among men of his own rank. Surrounded by a few of these, he caused himself to be crowned king at Scone, March 27, 1306. Edward soon heard of his proceedings,

sent troops to quell his revolt. Bruce was surprised by an English party in Methven Wood, near Perth, and was obliged to take refuge with a diminished band among the fastnesses of the Highlands. His wife is reported to have told him at this time that he was a summer king, but would never be a winter one. Still, however, that lady went every where by her husband's side, sharing in all his hardships. After maintaining for some time a precarious existence in the Highlands, it was judged proper that the King should retire to Ireland, to await the fortune of the next season. As he was making his way through a pass in the West Highlands, with a very few friends, he was set upon by a powerful chief of that district, called Mac Dougall, of Lorn, who cherished feelings of deadly hostility against him, for his having assassinated Cumin, who was the brother-in-law of Mac Dougall. Bruce defended himself with great bravery—killed three men who assailed him, all at one moment—but eventually could only release himself from the grasp of the Highland chief, by disengaging himself from his plaid or mantle, which was confined by a jewelled brooch. The family still possess this trophy of their ancestor's prowess; but many a brave Mac Dougall has since then fought in behalf of the descendants of King Robert, and when those descendants were nearly as low in fortune.* After encountering many more hardships, the outcast king reached a place of shelter in Ireland.

* In the insurrections of 1715 and 1745.

Having landed again, next summer, on the coast of Scotland, Bruce proceeded, in a series of petty skirmishes and surprises, all of which were more or less successful, to inflict renewed alarm upon the English monarch. Edward, no longer able to bear this perpetual thwarting of his designs, collected an army even more powerful than any he had ever led against Scotland; and, having first taken an oath that he would reduce the country or die in the attempt, began his march early in 1307, although he was at that time so much weakened by disease and exhaustion of the constitution, as to be only able to travel in a litter. When he reached Carlisle, enthusiasm caused him to believe himself much better, and he hung up his litter in the cathedral as an offering, and proceeded on horseback. He was only able, however, to reach the spot called Burgh-upon-Sands, on the coast of the Solway Firth, when his death came upon him. He was here in sight of Scotland, and it may be imagined with what agonized feelings of rage and despair the dying conqueror beheld, across the narrow firth, that refractory country, which, after all his efforts, all his battlings and his treaties, all his expenditure of blood and treasure, after the expenditure of his own life itself, seemed about to glide for ever from his grasp. Fondly trusting that he might yet complete in death what was denied to him in life, he commanded his son to carry his bones at the head of the army into Scotland, in the manner that a banner is carried, so that the treacherous Scots might yet tremble at the name and sight of Edward. His son, the imbecile Edward

II. had not the desire of conquest so strongly at heart; he quietly buried his father in Westminster Abbey, and after a short and ineffectual campaign in the south of Scotland, returned to enjoy the sweets of sovereignty at London.

For several years after this period, King Robert was incessantly employed in skirmishes with the garrisons which the English King maintained in Scotland, or in contending with those native lords of the soil who were adverse to his claims. In the course of this par-tizan warfare he was sometimes at the head of a powerful party, and sometimes a single fugitive pursued by blood-hounds. Throughout all his vicissitudes he seems to have invariably enjoyed the good wishes of the common people, to whom, as already mentioned, his cause was endeared by its being their own, and who always found some means of assisting and supporting him, however controlled in general by their landlords. At length, by a series of minute military transactions, which almost tires the reader of old chronicles, he found himself, in 1313, in possession of every fortress of any consequence in the kingdom except Stirling, with the Governor of which his brother Edward made a paction that, unless relieved by an English army before midsummer next year, it should be delivered into the hands of the Scots.

It was this circumstance that led to the celebrated battle of Bannockburn, by which the independence of Scotland was destined to be so fully and definitely asserted. Robert himself was much distressed when *he learned* the terms which his brother had made, as

he well knew that the chivalrous spirit of the age would make it necessary that an English army should be brought to rescue the castle; a visit which he could have as well spared, if with honour. The principles of chivalry, however, had as strong a hold of Bruce's mind as they could have of any man's in that age; and while still regretting the cause, he determined on meeting the English, as thus pledged, in a fair-stricken field.

As he had calculated, the English king was now at length roused by the terms of this treaty, to undertake what he had too long delayed, a personal expedition to Scotland, and that upon such a scale as seemed calculated to ensure success. The army collected for this purpose comprehended the whole feudal service of ninety-three great tenants of the English crown, besides a considerable force from Wales and Ireland, and some foreign mercenaries. In round numbers it amounted to a hundred thousand men, whereof four thousand were clad in complete steel, horse and man, and fifty thousand were archers, each of whom bore a bow as tall as himself, and shot arrows a cloth-yard long. An idea may be formed of the infinite pomp and circumstance of this array, from the fact, as calculated by a monkish writer of the time, that its baggage-waggon extended would have made a line a hundred and eighty miles long. It comprised, indeed, the whole chivalry, the whole military force of England; and so confidently did Edward anticipate victory by its means, that he brought with him a poetical monk, as one of the supernumer-

aries, to celebrate his successes as soon as they should take place.

Bruce, for his part, made all the preparations which circumstances could admit of. Forty thousand brave men obeyed the summons which called them to defend the independence of their country, or see it for ever destroyed. These he rendezvoused in the Torwood, near Stirling, a scene already hallowed to patriotism from having frequently been the retreat of Wallace, and where it was necessary to make a stand on the present occasion, so as to prevent the approach of the English army to that fortress, which was the immediate object of the expedition. In this host were men from every part of Scotland—Anglo-Saxons from the south and east districts, civilized Caledonians from the north-east province, Islesmen but recently transferred from a Norwegian to a Scottish allegiance, Highlanders descended from the earliest subjects of the Scottish kings, and men from Carrick and Galloway who owned a local as well as a national attachment to the fortunes of King Robert, from being the tenants of his patrimonial estates. One common sentiment animated them—implacable hostility against the nation whose ambitious sovereigns had for thirty years wrought them so much evil, joined to a resolution either to work out their country's deliverance, or to die in the attempt.

When Bruce learned that the English army had reached Edinburgh, thirty-six miles from his position, he drew out his troops in battle array upon a field, or *park*, a little to the south of Stirling, where certain

irregularities of ground promised him greater advantages than if he had remained precisely in front of that town and fortress. Arranging his first line in three divisions, whereof the right was protected by the banks of the rivulet called Bannockburn, while the left rested upon the village of St. Ninians, he himself assumed the command of a second line, or corps-de-reserve, which consisted chiefly of men from the remoter parts of his dominions. The commanders to whom he entrusted his foremost battalions, were those hardy warriors who had fought by his side, or in his interest, through the whole period of his struggles for the crown; one was his brother Edward, another his nephew, the celebrated Randolph Earl of Moray, a third Walter High Steward of Scotland, who, through his daughter, was destined to give a long train of heirs to the kingdom. It does not appear that many of the national nobility mingled in his army. They were still, perhaps, under scruples as to his right, or afraid of the eventual triumph of Edward. The host seems to have chiefly consisted of volunteer commoners, officered (if the expression may be used) by the King's own band of friends and fellow-adventurers. It contained no more than five hundred horse; but the King recollecting the instance of a late Continental battle, where the French cavalry were defeated by Flemish pikemen, trusted to the firmness of his ranks, and to the hedge of long spears which they would present on every side, for the means of counter-acting this disadvantage.

On the evening of Saturday the 22d of June, the

enormous host of Edward slept at Falkirk. Continuing their march next day, they soon perceived the Scottish army lying in three or four detached masses along a series of gentle heights, and paused to consider the propriety of giving immediate battle. This question being soon determined in the negative, on account of the fatigued state of the army, the English sovereign caused his men to encamp for the night, and in the mean time sent off a party of eight hundred horse to attempt the succour of Stirling Castle.

Bruce was riding about among his troops, engaged in the important business of animating them for the ensuing battle, when his experienced eye observed a cloud of dust, mingled with the glitter of armour, which suddenly rose to the left of his position. This was occasioned by the party sent to the relief of the castle, which, by taking a low and circuitous road, had almost got past his army unobserved. Highly offended at the negligence which had permitted such an advantage to be obtained by the enemy, he rode up to Randolph, who commanded in that direction, pointed out the design of the English party, and angrily told him, in the language of chivalry, that *a rose had fallen from his chaplet*. To repair such an error, a warrior of that age could do no less than peril his life ; and Randolph did so with great good will. Immediately setting off with a few hundreds of his infantry, he desperately attacked the English cavalry. They instantly turned upon him, and surrounded his little band in every direction. Randolph, throwing *his men into a square*, fought with the energy of a

knight seeking to retrieve an endangered reputation. His men, seconding his wishes, resisted the repeated attacks of the English with the greatest firmness, or, admitting them partially into their ranks, fought desperate combats hand to hand with their daggers, in which they were generally successful. The Scottish army could perceive this conflict, and easily calculate the danger in which their countrymen were placed. Sir James Douglas intreated permission from the King to go to his friend's succour; but Bruce would not grant it, being resolved, it would appear, that Randolph should himself retrieve his error, or suffer its proper consequences. Douglas, however, found himself unable to obey his master's order on an occasion like this, and rode off with a party towards the scene of the conflict. Just as he approached, he perceived that the Earl of Moray was about to gain a victory unassisted; and, with that generous feeling which governed the conduct of military men in that age, he resolved not to interfere with the honours of his friend. He stood by, a patient but delighted spectator, while Randolph caused the broken ranks of the English to fly back to their main position. The memory of this valiant achievement is preserved by the common people in the name which they give to the spot, *Randal's* (that is, Randolph's) *Field*.

Another circumstance auspicious to the Scottish arms, occurred about the same time with the above. King Robert was riding about in front of his ranks, attended by a little cluster of officers, from whom he was distinguished only by a slight coronet of gold,

which he wore above his helmet, when an English knight, named Sir Henry de Bohun, formed the ambitious wish of entering into private combat with him, in the hope, if successful, of winning eternal honour, by the end which he would thereby put to the whole war. He therefore set his powerful war-horse in motion, placed his lance in the rest, and galloped towards the King of Scots, who, comparatively unarmed, and mounted on a much smaller animal, must have seemed very ill fitted to withstand his attack. Bruce eyed him advancing, and, being too much of a *knight* to think of the *commander* at such a moment, did not avoid the meeting, as he might have justifiably done, but on the contrary rode out a little way from his circle of friends, as if anxious to afford every advantage to the design of his assailant. He seemed for a moment to await the shock of the English soldier, and both armies looked in breathless anxiety for a result which they knew was either to accomplish or mar the purpose for which they were assembled, and which was so instantly to be expected, that a twinkle of the eye-lid threatened to lose them the sight. The moment passed—a crash was heard—and Robert Bruce was seen still mounted on his little palfrey, while Sir Henry de Bohun lay a damaged and breathless corpse at his feet. The King had dexterously avoided the lance of the English knight, and, rising in his stirrups as he swept past, had broken head and helmet, and dashed him to the earth by one blow of his battle-axe, which was shivered to pieces by the blow, leaving only *the handle* in his grasp. The friends who instantly

came round the King, could not help entering a remonstrance against his imprudence, in thus risking his life at a time when it was of such importance to his people. He only glanced down at the stump of his weapon, and remarked, "I am sorry for my good battle-axe." He considered, in all probability, that though the risk was great, yet the shame of retreat from a fair personal combat at such a moment, would have had a most unfavourable effect upon the minds of his soldiers ; whereas an achievement like this, which long experience made him almost sure of performing to his desire, was calculated to inspire his men with additional confidence in their leader. It was thus with confirmed, though still modest hopes of success, that the Scots lay down for the night ; while the English, on the other hand, though yet entertaining the highest expectations from their numbers, and from their national reputation for superiority, were sensibly dashed at the failure of the detachment for the relief of Stirling, and at this still more striking omen. Neither of these incidents ought properly to have been held as predicating an evil event to the general conflict ; but how often do impressions from immediate circumstances of small moment, efface those which had been deliberately printed before by the most convincing evidence.

Both armies rose betimes next morning, and fitted themselves for the encounter. The English, who had spent the night riotously, included in their preparations only such arrangements as referred to the defence and nourishment of the person. The Scots

regarded also the edification of the mind. With that attention to things spiritual which to this day characterises the people in so remarkable a manner, they heard mass said by the Abbot of Inchaffray in front of their lines before breakfast, and afterwards knelt with devout feeling to receive the personal benediction of that holy man, who, for the purpose of bestowing it, passed along bare-footed and bare-headed, displaying in his hands a crucifix supposed to be of miraculous sanctity. The English King, who was now advancing with his proud squadrons, saw this last motion of the Scots, and exclaimed with delight, that they were kneeling to ask his mercy. To this a Scottish baron, who had long been in his service, made answer, that they asked mercy, but it was from heaven, not from the King of England. Edward concealed his mortification by ordering the charge to be sounded.

Firm in their ranks, each battalion under its local banner, and all beneath the lion standard of Scotland, which floated in ample folds from the highest part of the field—being fixed in a large earth-fast stone, which is yet pointed out with veneration—the host of Bruce awaited the formidable attack, to resist or yield to which, promised them continued independence or everlasting degradation. The first charge was made by the English cavalry under the Earls of Gloucester and Hereford, and it was firmly met by the division under Edward Bruce, the King's brother. In a short time the other parts of the English line came up, and the small Scottish columns became absorbed and lost in the multitudinous bands opposed to them, as rivers

enter and are swallowed up in the sea. Every where the Scottish infantry presented their lengthy spears to the charge of the English cavalry and men-at-arms, and were every where successful in repelling, by those means, attacks which otherwise must have overpowered them. Where the conflict came to personal rencontre, the Scottish soldier handled his short battle-axe and dagger with fearful effect. An arrow-flight as thick as rain proceeded from the English archers ; but King Robert was fortunately able to put a speedy end to that annoyance by his small party of light horse, whose attack the bowmen had no proper means of resisting. The battle then became what is so seldom exemplified in modern warfare, a hand-to-hand contention, in which many thousands of brave men fought eagerly and closely with each other for honour and life. It became a widely-extended single combat. "It was awful at this moment," says a historian who is supposed to have drawn his narration from eye-witnesses,* "to hear the noise of the four battalions fighting in a line, the clang of arms, the shouts of the knights as they raised their war-cry ; to see the flight of the arrows, which maddened the horses ; the alternate sinking and rising of the banners, and the ground streaming with blood, and covered with shreds of armour, broken spears, pennons, and rich scarfs, torn and soiled with blood and clay ; and to listen to the groans of the wounded and dying."

It is generally found in the case of a charge in mo-

* Barbour.

dern times, that the whole question is one of nerves—not of comparative military power; and that the party, therefore, which best bears the horrors of the first encounter, is sure to be left victor. Upon this principle, it would appear that the Scots having had the fortitude to endure the close fight for a certain space, by virtue of that high moral tension to which they were stretched, the English, as a matter of course, soon began to display marks of failing resolution. Just at this crisis, it happened that a large body of servants and camp-followers, who had been placed by King Robert behind a hill, chose to make their appearance with sheets displayed banner-wise, and with wild cries, so as to impress the English with the idea of a large force come to the assistance of the Scotch. No more was necessary to decide the fight. The press of battle relaxed. The heavy masses of the English began to sway back like a receding tide. The Scotch, hitherto fighting on the defensive, began to assume the assailant. Cries of “On them! on them! They fail! they fail!” resounded over the field. The King called out his enemy with redoubled vehemence, and charged the enemy with a fury which nothing could withstand. In a second’s space the fate of Scotland was fixed on the ascendant, and the enemies of her independence, who had just before been a host so powerful as to oppress the very imagination, became as worthless and unavailing as the chaff which flies before the wind.

The slaughter on neither side had as yet been great. It now became immense on the part of the fugitives.

As they pressed through the narrow defiles behind their position, the Scots made most grievous havoc among them, taking unrestrained revenge for the slaughters and oppressions of the last thirty years, and only sparing such persons of rank as promised to produce a good ransom. The rivulet of Bannockburn, which gave its name to the battle, is said to have been actually bridged over with the heaps of the slain. The King of England escaped with a small party, and found his first resting-place at Dunbar Castle, sixty miles distant, from which a mean fishing-boat afforded him a passage to England, almost as solitary as that of Xerxes, whose whole story the present so much resembles. His camp and baggage, containing immense wealth, became the prey of the Scots, who further gained prodigious sums by the ransom of their prisoners. As a ludicrous commentary upon the disappointed vain-glory of the English King, Bruce caused the poet-laureate whom Edward had brought to celebrate his triumphs, and who had fallen into the hands of the Scots, to write a poem on the opposite score; with which order the unfortunate monk complied, though the bad grace with which he consented is very evident on the face of his production.* As a matter of course, Stirling Castle now fell into the hands of King Robert, whereby his conquest of the whole country was completed.

* This person is believed to have remained in Scotland, to have settled at the village of Gattonside, near Melrose, and to have become founder of the name of Boston in Scotland.

The impression made on the public mind by this victory seems to have been very great ; so great as to excite even the superstitions of the people, which are so invariably called into play in an ignorant age, when any thing uncommon or important takes place. Among the wild stories told after it, one bears a highly picturesque, and even poetical character. It was said that on the day of the victory, "a knight in fair bright armour" suddenly appeared on horseback in the market-place of Aberdeen, where he related to the people all the particulars of the fight ; after which he was seen riding across the Pentland Firth, towards the Orkney Islands. As Aberdeen is at least a hundred and forty miles from Bannockburn, it was clear that this could scarcely be any one who had been present at the battle ; the people, therefore, considering the direction in which the figure was subsequently seen to ride, believed it to be the spirit of St. Magnus of Kirkwall. This holy shade had chosen, no doubt from motives of patriotism, to be present at the victory, and, in returning to his shrine in Orkney, had thought proper to tell what he had witnessed to the good folk of Aberdeen, who, from their distinguished loyalty on all occasions to Bruce, might be supposed particularly interested in the battle.

The battle of Bannockburn terminates a period in Scottish history. We find, in consequence of the feeling excited, and the glory acquired on this occasion, that the nation was consolidated in such a way as it had never been before. Henceforth there is no

trace of any of the distinctions of race and kind which had previously weakened Scotland. All is now one nation, (excepting so far as the Highlands are concerned,) and the government henceforth becomes a more regular and respectable structure.

The more immediate effect which the victory had upon the national mind was one of a very powerful nature. It gave the Scots a pride in their independence as a nation, which prevented a union with England for centuries, and even yet fires many a single bosom in the country with notions favourable to liberty.*

* Although there is a mistake in considering the struggle which Bruce made for a crown, and the people for national independence, as a contest for *liberty*, it is impossible to read the fervid ode of Burns, beginning "Scots wha hae wi' Wallace bled," without going, to a certain extent, into the prevailing notion. This poet, it would appear, carried his misinterpretation of the event so far as to argue from it to the French Revolution, which was certainly very different. To prove this, I introduce a letter of his, never before printed, in which it is evident that, in speaking of Scotland in 1514, he was thinking of France in 1794, when the despotisms of Europe were rising to put down the march of liberal opinions in that country:—

"To the Right Honourable the Earl of Buchan," (enclosing a copy of "Scots wha hae wi' Wallace bled.")

"MY LORD,—Will your Lordship allow me to present you with the inclosed little composition of mine, as a small tribute of gratitude for that acquaintance with which you have been pleased to honour me. Independent of my enthusiasm as a Scotchman, I have rarely met with any thing in history which interests my feelings as a man equally with the story of Bannockburn. On the one hand, a cruel but able usurper, leading on the finest army in Europe, to extinguish the last spark of freedom among a greatly-daring

The name of Robert Bruce was endeared by it above all other names except the more virtuous one of Wallace ; and though his right as a sovereign was questionable, he became, by dint of this achievement, the founder of a race which yet holds sway, not only over Scotland, but over the people of many realms besides. The departure in his case from the regular rules of succession was a glorious point gained by the people ; it was a rude and early instance of the Revolution, giving the first hint of the maxim that, in certain extreme cases, the better genealogical title may be sacrificed to the superior merit. Perhaps it is to such accidents as these in the succession of the two countries, which have caused kings to make up in good government what they wanted in hereditary right, that we are to attribute the amazing advance of the British people in freedom of government, while most of the other nations of Europe have been sensibly retrograding in the race of liberty.

and greatly-injured people ; on the other hand, the desperate relics of a gallant nation devoting themselves to rescue their bleeding country, or perish with her.

“ Liberty ! thou art a prize truly and indeed invaluable ! for never canst thou be too dearly bought !

“ If my little ode has the honour of your Lordship’s approbation, it will gratify my highest ambition.

“ I have the honour to be, my Lord, your Lordship’s deeply indebted and most devoted humble servant,

Dumfries, Jan. 12, 1794.

“ ROBERT BURNS.”

CHAPTER III.

ROBERT BRUCE—JAMES I.

ROBERT BRUCE reigned with great glory for fifteen years after the battle of Bannockburn; during all which time, from the superior vigour of his government, and the respectability which he had acquired by his victory, he caused the Scottish nation to outshine, in some measure, the comparatively powerful and wealthy kingdom of England. Upon that country he made, and caused to be made, innumerable inroads, inflicting upon the northern counties, as far, it is said, as Humber, a severe vengeance for the distresses into which his country and himself had been plunged by the ambitious policy of the English sovereigns. Where he himself did not lead the Scottish armies, they were led by Randolph, Earl of Moray, by the good Sir James Douglas, or by some other member of that illustrious group of officers which had supported him so well at Bannockburn. The severity of this system of warfare was excessive, and only to be justified by the previous circumstances. It at length reduced England so low, that in 1328 its Parliament was fain to conclude a peace with Scotland, in terms of which the right of Bruce, and the inde-

pendency of the kingdom, were at once acknowledged. Before this time Edward II. had been deposed, and his son Edward III. a minor, placed on the throne.

Among the transactions of this latter part of Bruce's reign, it ought to be mentioned that he thought proper to direct one of his attacks upon Ireland, which then, as well as now, was a weak point in the English state. His brother Edward, at the head of a small but hardy band of Scots, reduced a great part of that island, and was actually crowned its king. During the warfare, Bruce himself led over a reinforcement, and took a personal share in the glories of the campaign. It was afterwards unfortunate. Edward Bruce was overthrown in a pitched battle, and it was with some difficulty that the relics of his army regained their native country. Bruce died June 7, 1329, at the immature age of fifty-six, yet completely outworn with infirmities caused by the hardships of his middle life. Being unreconciled to the Pope for his sacrilegious murder of Cumin, he directed that, by way of expiating his offence, his heart should be carried to Jerusalem, whither he had long entertained a wish to go, if circumstances would have permitted, to prosecute the Holy War. This shows piety to have been a prominent feature in the character of Bruce. He died with more of the regards and regrets of his subjects than perhaps any other monarch before or since ; for, while his feats dazzled their imaginations, his delivery of the country from a foreign yoke had secured their warmest gratitude. He was honoured by the Parliament with a splendid marble monument, of French

manufacture, which was erected over his tomb in the abbey of Dumfermline; a tribute of popular respect which has been paid to no other Scottish monarch. We may judge of the deep impression which Bruce had made upon his age from other circumstances—from the care evinced by the people to maintain his dynasty even when degenerate, and their unfailing resolution, at whatever risk, to preserve the independency which he had wrought out for them. We also see it surviving, in the minds of the Scottish people at large, even to this day. Among other venerators of Bruce, it is pleasant to find the successive members of his own family. James I. meeting, a century after, with an old woman who remembered seeing him, inquired anxiously regarding his personal appearance. James III. at the battle of Sauchie in 1488, carried—alas, in what a different hand!—a sword which had been wielded by his great ancestor, on nearly the same field.* It is observable, in the accounts of the furniture of the palaces at a somewhat later period, that a cup and other things, supposed to have belonged to King Robert, formed part of the royal stock of plate. And we find Queen Mary, later still, endeavouring to awaken the loyalty of her rebellious subjects, by reminding them that she was of the blood of Bruce.

The succession, after the death of this admirable monarch, devolved upon his son, David II. a child of

* The battles of Bannockburn and Sauchie took place within a mile of each other.

four years ; and the government was consigned to Randolph Earl of Moray. In this state of things the Baliol family thought proper to revive its forfeited claims ; and the crisis was favourable for such an attempt. Edward III. who turned out a monarch of military genius equal to that of his grandfather, entertained the design of asserting a claim to the kingdom of France. To do so with effect, it was necessary in the first place to chain up the Scots, whom the French, by alliance or bribery, had it always in their power to use as the means of creating a diversion upon England. Edward therefore bethought him, since it seemed impossible to subdue the people entirely, that his end might be accomplished by setting up a prince of the Baliol stock, who would be his sworn tool and slave. He assisted Edward Baliol, son of the deposed John, to make an attempt upon Scotland. That personage landed on the shores of the Firth of Forth, August 1332. He was met at Dupplin by a Scottish army under the Earl of Mar, successor to Moray in the Regency ; and such was the fortunate effect of a surprise which he put into practice, that he defeated a host four times his superior, and was subsequently crowned at Scone. David II. now eight years of age, with a princess of England to whom he had been affianced at the last peace, was sent to France. Edward Baliol continued in his usurped seat two months, was then defeated, and obliged to fly the country, by a party loyal to the Bruce dynasty ; but there still continued a war for the subjugation of Scotland. Many mutual inroads took place, the frontiers of both

countries were dreadfully ravaged. The Scots lost one decisive battle at Halidon Hill, June 20, 1333, but were nevertheless able to continue their defence. The events of the few subsequent years, as indeed of nearly the whole of this century, were chiefly confined to alternate inroads and treaties, without ever producing either a fair war or a cordial peace. Edward III. however, gained his general point—that of keeping the Scots employed, while he gained the celebrated battles of Cressy and Poitiers, by which he had so nearly reduced the French monarchy under his own power.

David II. returned from France in 1341; and though only eighteen years of age, at once put himself at the head of those patriots, who, during his absence, had defended the country so nobly. This monarch, however, was different from his father in every respect except personal valour. Whether from the natural bent of his character, or from his French education, he was much addicted to pleasure; and he exhibited the coldness, the selfishness, and the insensibility to generous or elevated principles of action, which so often accompany such a disposition. Unfortunately, in 1346, as he was conducting an incursion into England, he was taken prisoner in a battle near Durham, and conducted in triumph to London. He there formed one in a singular procession, which must be well remembered by the reader of English history, in which the Black Prince, son of Edward III. rode through the streets, with the captive King of France

riding on one side of his little palfrey, and the King of Scots riding on the other.

While David lay a prisoner in England, the country fell naturally under the authority of his nephew and heir presumptive, Robert, the High Steward of Scotland, grandson of Robert Bruce by his only daughter Marjory. This person, who happened to be six or eight years older than his royal uncle, and of a much more virtuous character, conducted the affairs of the kingdom with great discretion. Edward, in 1356, led into the country an army much greater than that with which he gained the battle of Cressy; yet, by the prudence of the Steward in avoiding a general encounter, and by the natural peculiarities of the country, which were its best defence, he was obliged to return without attaining his object. It may thus be seen that, even without the animating presence of a king, who was in that age considered the natural leader of the national armies, Scotland was still able to protect her independency.

The admiration, however, with which this may be regarded, becomes yet greater when we hear of the constancy displayed by the country under a severer trial which was about to befall it. Edward, having found five invasions of Scotland unavailing, now changed his policy. He resolved to win Scotland by what are called fair means. In the first place he concluded a peace with the country, and for a ransom of a hundred thousand merks restored its monarch. He then threw his own country open to the visits of the Scottish nobles, and, by affecting generous

feelings towards them, and towards Scotland in general, endeavoured to overcome the prejudices of the people. By a long and complicated series of intrigues, he at length attached a large party to his interest; and, strange to say, King David was at its head. To account for this, it is necessary to state that David II. had now no hope of heirs of his own body. With feelings which we find every day exemplified, he did not like the collateral family which awaited his death in order to step into his seat. Having lived no more than five years of adult life in Scotland, he had little feeling of country. He was rather a Frenchman, or an Englishman, than a Scot. Thus circumstanced, he yielded to the blandishments of King Edward, and incredible as it may seem of the son of Robert Bruce, consented to become the chief agent in a scheme for getting Lionel, the third son of the English king, to be accepted by the Scottish estates as his heir. The sufferings and the toil which this little state had endured hitherto, in order to keep itself free, were great; but, as may be conceived, they never were greater than now. This was a climax to its woes, which might have been expected to bear it to the very earth. On the contrary, even with its King as its open and chief enemy, it contrived, by the exertion of still greater constancy than it had yet displayed, to surmount even this trial. It met the proposal of King David with a burst of honest indignation, and expressed in open parliament its resolution never upon any account to submit to an Englishman. David was so cowed by the aspect which his people assumed on

this occasion, as to withdraw the proposal. Thus we see, more than four centuries ago, and in the ruder portion of the British Island, public opinion exerting occasionally an irresistible control over the government.

It was in 1363 that David brought out his infamous proposal. From that period till his death, in 1371, Edward was at least able, by his means, to keep the country in check. At the latter period, as David, though a second time married, had left no heirs, Robert, the High Steward, succeeded to the throne at the mature age of fifty-six.

This new sovereign was the first of that race which is so well known in history under the name of the Stewarts. They acquired this surname, according to common custom, from the office they had held under the Scottish kings before their accession to the throne. The first of the family known in Scotland was Walter, who held the office of High Steward under David I. more than two hundred years before this time; being probably a cadet of the noble Anglo-Norman family of Fitz-Alan, in England, who, like many such persons, had sought for employment and preferment in Scotland. Walter, the sixth in descent from this person, distinguished himself so much at Bannockburn, where he held a principal command, as to be preferred to marry Marjory, the King's daughter. Robert, now become King, was the issue of this match.

Robert, though in earlier life distinguished as a warrior, was now inclined to peace. He is described as having been a sovereign of easy access and pleasant

address, possessed of a person whose commanding stature and dignity might have inspired awe, but of such graceful and kindly manners withal, that in reality he only excited affection. His title to the crown having always been a popular object, as identified with the cause of national independency, he commanded at his accession the heartiest acclamations of his subjects. It is observable, however, that the nobles, who had lately beheld him in their own rank, if not rather beneath it, and many of whom yet cherished a wish to forward the English usurpation, did not hail him with much cordiality. It seems to have only been by dint of his personal prudence, his extensive connections through the means of a numerous family of sons and daughters, the favour in which he was held by the people at large, and some minuter circumstances, that he escaped a great deal of trouble from that body, many members of which had advanced, during the long period of the weakness of the crown, to a condition of power and influence such as had never before been known in Scotland.

In 1377, Edward III. died, after having seen the efforts of fifty years to reduce France and Scotland end in disappointment. His grandson, Richard II. who succeeded him at the age of eleven years, was unable for some time to give any annoyance to Scotland. It was now rather the turn of the French and Scots, who had suffered so many aggressions from England, to attack that country while under the disadvantage of a minority. This was done in several instances with considerable success, the French sending troops to

Scotland to join the armies which were there raised for the purpose. These warlike proceedings, however, were undertaken rather at the instance of the nobles than of the King; for he, as already mentioned, was inclined to peace. In one of the incursions, which took place in 1388, the Earl of Douglas, who was by far the most puissant of the Scottish grandees, fought the battle of Otterburn with Henry Percy, an incident which must be familiar to all youthful readers, as the ground-work of the ballad entitled *Chevy Chase*.

Robert II. the first of the Stewarts, died in 1389, leaving the crown to his son Robert III. who unfortunately happened to be a person of somewhat weak intellect, though of extremely amiable dispositions. In consequence of the mental deficiency of this monarch, the government was chiefly entrusted to his younger brothers, the Earls of Fife and Buchan, the former of whom took charge of the southern parts of the country, while the latter assumed the management of the north. This was a great evil to Scotland, for the Earl of Fife, who afterwards procured the title of Duke of Albany (the first instance of that rank in the kingdom), was a man of timid, cruel, and dissimulative character, while his brother Buchan was of so ferocious and uncontrollable a disposition as to acquire the popular nickname of the *Wolf of Badenoch*. The other children of Robert II. in this age acquired an extensive footing in Perthshire, where their descendants, in great numbers, still possess lands as country gentlemen, or have sunk into the condition of commoners.

During this reign, with the exception of an invasion

in 1400, by Henry IV. of England, the usurping successor of Richard II., the country enjoyed relaxation from external warfare. Its history, therefore, becomes, in a great measure, the history of the royal family. In 1402, Albany, from jealousy of the increasing influence of the Duke of Rothsay, the King's eldest son, caused him to be starved to death in Falkland Palace. The King was unable to punish this dreadful crime, and could only endeavour to save his second son from a similar fate, by embarking him for France, under the pretence that he should pursue his education in that polite country. Unfortunately, as this royal youth was coasting along the eastern shore of England he was seized by an English cruizer, and notwithstanding that it was a time of truce, brought prisoner before Henry IV. who, for no other reason, it would appear, than that he might have a hostage for the good behaviour of Scotland, immediately consigned him to durance in Windsor Castle.

About this time a person appeared in Scotland who was supposed to be the dethroned King Richard II. though that prince was declared by Henry IV. to have died long ago in England. The Duke of Albany immediately took him under charge; and, being anxious that the young prince James should be detained in England, so that he might himself enjoy the government without interruption, held up the mysterious person who had fallen into his hands as a kind of bugbear to the English sovereign, insinuating that if the rightful heir of Scotland should be let loose, so also should the rightful monarch of England. Thus

the two usurpers (for such they might both be considered) kept each other in check, very much after the manner of two ordinary felons who know each other's secrets. The event had a fatal effect upon the weak and aged King Robert, who died in 1406, of grief, it is said, for the captivity of his son.

Albany continued to act as Regent of Scotland, without challenge, for many years, and, as he took some pains to reconcile the people to his government, it is said to have been not unpopular. He at length seems to have entertained a hope that he might transmit the supreme rule to his children. His eldest son Murdoch, having been taken prisoner in an incursion into England, several years before prince James, he negotiated for the delivery of that person, without making the least attempt to release the rightful heir of the throne. Accordingly, at his death in 1419, Murdoch succeeded to the office of Governor, as to an hereditary right, no parliament being called to give the sanction which was legally necessary for such a proceeding.

Murdoch was a prince as much weaker than his father, as David II. was weaker than Robert Bruce. He governed, or appeared to govern, for three or four years; while the great nobles, in reality, managed the country as they pleased, without regard to him. A change had by this time taken place in the relations of Scotland and England. Henry IV. died in 1414, after having, in a great measure, secured the crown to his family. His son, the distinguished Henry V. prosecuted a glorious career of conquest in France,

which was not interrupted till his death. All fear on account of the supposed King Richard was closed by the death of that person at Stirling, in 1419. There now, therefore, remained to the Duke of Bedford, Protector of England in the minority of Henry VI., little cause for detaining the rightful heir of Scotland in captivity.

The imbecile Murdoch is supposed to have favoured the restoration of this prince, either from a disgust at the troubles of government, or from resentment at the ingratitude and violence of his heir-apparent. It is at least certain that he entered into the negotiation for James's enlargement with great good-will. Accordingly, in 1424, after a confinement of nineteen years, James, who had become lawful King of Scotland in 1406, by the death of his father, was liberated by the English for a consideration of forty thousand pounds.

CHAPTER IV.

JAMES THE FIRST.

THERE are landing-places in history, where it is proper for the writer to take a reflective survey of such general features of his subject as do not naturally fall into the current of minute events. The present is a period of this kind in the history of Scotland, and should not be passed over without comment.

It was now upwards of a hundred years since the battle of Bannockburn. That event, as already mentioned, had tended greatly to consolidate and give aim to the national spirit. It had knit monarch, and nobility, and clergy, and people—Scot, Scandinavian, Galwegian, Norman, and Anglo-Saxon—into one serried phalanx, ready on the slightest warning to start up in defence of the national independence. It had nationalized the nation. Scotland, previously to the Wars of the Competition, from the loose and disjointed parts of which it was composed, was very liable to be shaken from its integrity : and indeed was so for a time by Edward I. But now, having passed the danger triumphantly, and being put properly on its guard, it was become firm and vigorous, and resolute against all violation. It resembled the shell-fish, which in

ordinary circumstances may be easily pushed from the rock on which it is placed, but, when informed of its danger, clings so close as only to be removed with considerable difficulty.

One question arises out of these circumstances, which it must be of the highest interest to the present generation to have satisfactorily answered. Through what peculiarity of the national mind was it that the country was preserved for so many ages from the grasp of its own powerful neighbour? To him who writes these pages there appears only one feasible answer. It was through the same happy strength of spirit, alternately, as circumstances dictate, ambitious and obstinate, which has been so conspicuous in every age of the national history, and yet forms so broad a feature in the character of the people.

From the very first, when the Scots were merely a wandering tribe, something of this kind is apparent in the conquest which they made of Ireland; subsequently, it is testified by their fixing themselves so easily in possession of the whole northern moiety of the British isle. Further, in the eleventh century, it is more splendidly evinced by the rapid aggressions they were making upon the Saxon kingdom: aggressions which, but for the intrusion of the Normans from another quarter, seemed likely to end in an appropriation of the whole island. There appears, indeed, throughout the whole history of the Scots, a genius for acquisition which strongly countenances this theory. The fortitude, therefore, with which the nation resisted the aggressions of England in the four-

teenth century, was just the national genius reduced from an active to a passive condition ; the wild deer at bay. We find the people in an attitude nearly similar, three centuries after, when resisting the innovations attempted upon their religion.

The physical condition of the country during this period demands some attention. First, as to the southern portion, a considerable part of the border, or frontier, including Roxburghshire and Annandale, was, for a considerable part of the time, held and garrisoned by the English. The remainder of the country south of the Forth, at least towards the east, was generally kept in a waste condition, as a kind of defence for the rest ; in consequence of which the English, in their formal invasions, were generally obliged to turn back from pure starvation before getting within sight of an enemy. Upon the whole, the south of Scotland may be described as in this age used only for the same purpose as the walls built in earlier times by the Roman emperors ; it was a wide trench, fortified by famine and desolation.

It was in Fife and Stirlingshire, in Lanarkshire, Perthshire, Angus, and the low countries beyond the latter district, that the strength of the kingdom lay. The Highlands were in a condition purely barbarous, except that they were under subjection to a set of chiefs generally of Norman or Anglo-Saxon lineage, who had in the course of time acquired a right of seignoury over them. The Western Islands were so far different from the Highlands, that the chief who ruled over them professed entire independency of

the King of Scotland. One of these lords, in 1411, fought a battle with the lieutenant of the Governor Albany, at Harlaw, exactly as one state fights with another. As for the Orkney and Shetland Islands, they were held by the King of Denmark, and had been so from the earliest times.

The limited kingdom thus formed, as it scarcely exceeded one of the members of the Saxon Hephtharchy in political importance, and could never be considered as altogether standing on its own foundation, was perhaps hardly worthy of the name of kingdom in the modern sense. It might rather be described as a small northern state which happened to emerge from the dark ages in a separate and independent condition, and whose military leader happened to have assumed the title, common in those times, even to small naval adventurers, of king. Insignificant, however, as it was in the family of European nations, it had borrowed a great number of institutions from the English, which it presented on a miniature scale. Like England, it had its parliament, though with this difference, that the three estates of nobility, clergy, and burgesses, (the last admitted for the first time in the reign of Baliol,) sat all in one house. It had also a complete set of state-officers, who were nearly the same in title and authority as the English. As yet there was no regular court of justice; the King seems to have been himself both civil and criminal judge. In this and some other matters which indicate civilization, the Scotch were a good deal behind the English. They had no proper law

court till 1532, when the *Session* was instituted. Neither had they any university till 1410, when that of St. Andrew's was founded by the clergy, as a school of theological education. It is surprising, nevertheless, that they were as forward as their southern neighbours in the cultivation of general literature. Sir Thomas of Ercildoun, Barbour, and Wintoun, who wrote poetry in the Anglo-Norman language during the fourteenth century, are more than equal to the contemporary English writers. Perhaps, in other things the Scotch might have kept pace with their ancient rivals, if they had not been so constantly occupied in the grand business of war. The right hand of the nation being, as it were, required for wielding the sword in its defence, it was only with the left that it could prosecute the cultivation of literature or the arts.

Owing to the weakness of the successive sovereigns, and the unpopularity of at least one of them, together with the want of ancient title in the Stewart family, the nobles had now come to possess enormous influence in the state. In a feudal government, it is the natural result of incapacity, or minority, or senility in the sovereign, that the nobles should start forward into power; for, under such circumstances, the country at once looks to them as a regency. Hence we find the apparent phenomenon of a parliament—that is a convention of nobles, exerting their own will in opposition to David II., and in general causing him to take the course they prescribe. It was the same species of control which the Janissaries exercised over the

Sultan ; for, virtually, the nobles were the only army which the King could raise. It may thus be perceived that the feudal system contained within itself the seeds of freedom. And such has really been exemplified in both countries : the outline of the history of British liberty being, in one word, that the nobles first wrought it out of the hands of weak, minor, or ill-titled kings, and that the middle ranks afterwards got their share from the nobles, as it were, by purchase ; a process not yet complete.

From the frequent invasions of the English during the fourteenth century, Scotland did not advance so fast, either in commerce or agriculture, as it otherwise might have done. Yet it is surprising to see how the genius of the nation made its way under all difficulties. The people at this period exported great quantities of corn, wool, hides, and other raw productions, to the Continent ; bringing back manufactured goods and articles of luxury, or, what was more to be regretted, arms and accoutrements. As yet there were scarcely any artizans in the country ; the incorporations of such persons are almost all dated from the succeeding century. The whole industry of the country was as yet exerted in the languid employments of the farmer and the shepherd. It is, indeed, of amazingly late years that the Scotch have become a manufacturing nation. They have chiefly caught the spirit from the English since the Union. It is not yet fifty years since they ceased to import all the materials used in writing, and in forming books, from Holland.

It was to the government of such a country, when

under all the disorganization consequent upon an imbecile regency, that James the First acceded, in 1424, after a captivity of nineteen years, and in the thirtieth year of his age.

There is scarcely any personage in the whole history of Scotland, whose personal qualities and circumstances are so apt to dazzle the imagination as those of the young prince now introduced to notice. Gifted with extraordinary mental abilities, possessed of uncommon energy of character, informed with all the learning, and polished with all the accomplishments of that age ; young, handsome, athletic ; a poet, a musician, and a man of general taste ; such is the round of glittering qualifications which is presented to us with the name of James. On the other hand ; a newly emancipated captive, after an unheard of period of durance ; bringing with him a young English princess, whose heart he is supposed to have gained by his verses while in prison ; and coming, with all his graceful gifts and attributes, to attempt the civilization of his native kingdom ; what circumstances could be better fitted to interest the heart in his favour?

It is only, however, among minds of a modern complexion, warm with that enthusiasm in the cause of the literary against the ignorant which so remarkably characterises the age, that James is in reality calculated to win admiration. The grave judgment which weighs him in the balance of his own time, finds him greatly wanting as a sovereign. Passing over cruelty and avarice, with which he was loudly charged by the popular voice in his own time, he certainly was defi-

cient to a great degree in that common sense, or *savoir faire*, as the French call it, which every man finds more or less necessary, to teach him what to do and what not to do under various circumstances, but which, to a man of public station, who every day has to forecast the negative as well as positive results of great measures, is a quality most indispensable. The very education which gave James his most attractive qualities, had acted against him here. Inspiring him with fantastic and pragmatistical views, it caused him to undertake plans for the reformation of his subjects in matters of police, which any person of more experience in the world could have shown to be calculated to do little more than alienate their affections. It seems to have been James's notion that he could at once, by a mere series of acts of parliament, make Scotland as good as that better country which he had just quitted. He never calculated upon the obstacles, upon the want of materials, upon the disinclination of the people to be improved. Indeed, it may be said that James exemplified in government, what is extremely obvious in private life, that talent and education hardly ever succeed by themselves, nor till the individual possessing them has also acquired the humbler qualification just mentioned.

One of the earliest acts of James's government was to bring the whole of the surviving members of the family of Albany to the block. These persons, as his nearest relations, had conducted the government in his absence. Murdoch, the Duke, is said to have done so without commission from parliament. It has

never been shown, however, nor even insinuated, that he was guilty of any malversation of office ; while it is evident that he was sanctioned in his possession of the government, both by custom and by the consent of the nation. That he did not attempt to set himself up as a usurper, is proved by a public document, in which he makes reservation of the obedience due to the King, then captive in England, as well as by the activity he displayed in procuring James's liberation. Yet, though it be absolutely impossible to discern the fault of this nobleman, he and his two sons, Walter and Alexander, together with his father-in-law the Earl of Lennox, a man approaching to eighty years of age, were all beheaded on the Castle-hill of Stirling, within a year after James's return. There are just two motives which could urge the King to such a bloody proceeding, if we lay aside the absurd theory that it was in revenge for the guilt of his uncle Duke Robert. One is, the desire of annexing the estates of his victims to the crown ; the other, that principle which induces an eastern despot to destroy his collateral relations. The prevailing impression of the age seems to have been, that the former was the King's real motive ; but we are inclined to allow the latter considerable weight also. In almost all the intricate points of Scottish history, a good deal of light is to be derived from the contemporary incidents in England. What at this time was the most prominent feature in English history ? The establishment of the Lancastrian branch of the royal family upon the throne, to the exclusion of the elder house of York. It is also

evident, in the whole history of the time, that the people were apt to lose sight of, or overlook the pretensions of primogeniture, and award the crown in their minds to the worthiest rather than the eldest-born. Thus it becomes probable that James, in destroying his cousins, who, be it remarked, were very popular, was only taking care lest they should rise up in rivalry against himself or his posterity, as Henry IV. had risen against Richard II.

In whatever way we view this deed, it appears quite indefensible. If proceeding from cupidity, as the people universally surmised, it was to the last degree base; if from the fear of a usurpation, or to prevent the affections of the people from being drawn away towards other members of his family, it was only so in a less degree, as the moving passion was not so very mean. But it was not only a crime, it was also a blunder. It shocked the feelings of the people, and communicated to them, at the very first, an unfavourable impression of their sovereign. The Albany government had in it a smack of national barbarism, or an antagonism to the manners of England, which pleased the grosser feelings of the people. These victims, moreover, had been guilty of no specific crime. Unto all, "blood," according to the old Scottish proverb, "was thicker than water;" and it was dreadful to see, even under the sanction of judicial forms, so many noble persons fall by the command of a kinsman. It was impossible to look upon such a scene without mentally execrating the barbarous monarch who had conjured it up before their eyes.

James's subsequent proceedings were not more apt to render him a popular king, being of a kind eminently calculated to shock the oldest and most cherished prepossessions of his subjects. He caused parliament to pass a series of statutes for the improvement of commerce, agriculture, and other departments of the national economy—generally of a wise and worthy kind in the abstract, but rendered in a great measure useless by the precipitation with which they were brought *en masse* upon the people. As the most of his innovations were suggested to him by English statutes, and could not be introduced without deranging many existing interests, it would have been necessary to bring them in gradually and with very little noise. But James, on the contrary, imposed them all at once. The consequence was, that the people grumbled excessively, and began to look upon their new king as a tyrant.

One of the great aims of James's existence was to restore the crown to its ancient influence, and to reduce the nobles to their former subordination. For this purpose he found it necessary to enter into a strong alliance with the clergy, a body which, in his time, possessed great power, and was the only part of the state that he could balance off against the nobility. By means of the support which he thus procured, he was able to go a considerable way in his plans; but it was at almost as great an expense as that which the ancient magicians were said to incur, when they called in the aid of demons to execute their supernatural projects. James was induced by the clergy, in return for their services, to suppress an attempt which was

made in his reign to introduce the Lollard, or Wickcliffe heresy; in other words, the dawning light of the Reformation. He sanctioned the burning of one Petet Cwarar, a Bohemian physician, who visited Scotland as a secret missionary of that faith; and he caused a statute to be enacted in Parliament against all such attempts. At the same time it must be allowed, that the King probably felt as sincere an antipathy to the new doctrines as the clergy.

James also entertained the ambitious wish of subjecting to his dominion the whole of the remote districts hitherto independent of his authority, so that his kingdom might experience no further annoyance, either from their internal turbulence, or from their frequent alliances with England. For this purpose he established himself, with a parliament of his friends, at Inverness; and, having summoned all the Highland chiefs to pay him a visit, seized them when they came, and precipitated them into a dungeon. It is strange to find that the first acquaintance of these feudal dignitaries with the family of Stewart, for whose sake they were destined, in after times, to do and suffer so much, took place under circumstances of this kind. Eventually, James only put three of them to death, as an example; the rest he set free, upon a promise of homage and peaceable behaviour. The Lord of the Isles was among the latter number.

No sooner had this personage got his liberty, than he flew to arms for the purpose of revenging the insult which had been put upon him. As the Highlands in general burned with the same indignant feelings,

he soon collected an army of ten thousand men, with whom he marched down to the low country, and burnt the town where he had lately suffered so severe a mortification.

James lost no time in marching against him; overtook his desultory army in Lochaber; attacked and overthrew it; and the insurgent chief was soon brought to sue for mercy. This boon was granted on condition of his performing a very humiliating rite. He had to appear in a half-naked condition before the high altar of Holyrood Abbey at Edinburgh, where the King and Queen were holding festival, and there delivering up his sword, was obliged to beg upon his knees for a public pardon. The result of these prompt measures on the part of the King was, that during the remainder of his reign, with little interruption, the Highlands and Isles paid him a nominal obedience, and acknowledged their countries formed part of the kingdom of Scotland.

From the very imperfect state of the public records during this reign, it is difficult to arrive at a perception of either the motives or results of many of James's acts. Upon the whole, it seems unquestionable, that he was chiefly actuated by an ardent and uncalculating desire of reforming his subjects; and that they, on their part, considered the measures which he took for that purpose as to the last degree vexatious, and even tyrannical. Like the Dutch professor of the novelist, who found he had lived all his life comfortably without a knowledge of Greek, they could not be brought to see the necessity of the new

antics which their sovereign wished to teach them ; but, holding fast by their integrity and their sloth, deprecated the besom of reformation which he was constantly plying around them. With the nobles there was still deeper cause of offence. They beheld his frequent forfeitures and imprisonments of the members of their body, his repeated edicts, limiting their retinues and ordering a show of their charters, with ill-suppressed wrath. It is scarcely, indeed, to be supposed, that men of high ancestry and great possessions, could very quietly endure the indiscreet and overbearing manner of this young king, whose grandfather they had lately seen occupying a station in the kingdom rather inferior to their own, and who had himself been purchased back by them from a degrading captivity.

It is chiefly from the circumstances of the King's death, which happen to have been very minutely chronicled, that these inferences are to be made. The manner of that event was as follows :—

There was a gentleman named Sir Robert Graham—a cadet of the family since ennobled under the title of Montrose—who had been an adherent of the house of Albany, and regarded the policy of the King towards that family, and the nobles in general, with very indignant feelings. James having at length given this person a more moving cause of offence, by depriving his nephew, with slight colour of law, of a title and estate, he became so much infuriated as to resolve upon openly braving the royal power. He proposed to the nobles, that if they would undertake to back him in

the attempt, he should go up to the King in Parliament, and arrest him as a traitor to the State. To this they all consented; and he unhesitatingly put the scheme into execution. At the very next meeting of the national senate, he seized the sovereign as he sat in his chair, and addressed him in these words:—
“Sir, I arrest you in the name of all the three estates of your realm, here now assembled; for just as your liege people are bound and sworn to obey your Majesty, so are you sworn to govern your people righteously, and preserve them from all wrong:” language in which we trace with surprise the principle of the British monarchy finally established at the Revolution; though, in all probability, the speaker derived his ideas rather from a retrospective knowledge of the early constitution of the Gothic monarchies, than from a prospective anticipation of the liberal notions of a later age. “Is it not so?” added Graham, turning with surprise to the nobles, who, instead of rising to assist him, sat all still upon their seats, confounded, it would appear, with a renewed impression of the terrible character of the King. James took advantage of the pause, and ordered Graham into custody as a traitor. He was immediately carried out of the hall, muttering as he went, in a tone of the deepest indignation, “Unhappy is the fate of him who tries to serve the commonwealth.”

The King did not think it safe or necessary to put Graham to death for this offence; but caused him to be forfeited and banished. Perhaps he could not have made a more unfortunate choice of an object for

his mercy. That Graham was a man of strong feelings, and of deep and powerful mind, is evident from what has just been related of him. He was one of those persons who cannot with safety be offended, and at the same time permitted to live. Retiring to the Highlands, he soon learned the lamentable fate which befel his wife and children in consequence of his forfeiture. Then bending the whole powers of his mind upon the one idea of revenge, he mentally vowed that either the King should die, or he himself should cease to live. There was a practice then in use in England, by which, in the event of a king doing evident wrong to one of his subjects, the said subject was entitled to disavow his allegiance, and hold the sovereign at open war; it was called *Diffidation*, and did not become obsolete till the increasing despotism of the Kings of England introduced the belief that they were irresponsible to their subjects. In compliance, apparently, with this custom, Graham sent a letter to King James, signed and sealed with his own hand, in which he told him that, for his intolerable tyranny, and the destruction he had brought upon himself, his wife, and children, he renounced his allegiance, defied him to his teeth, and would take the first opportunity that might occur of slaying him. James was so much alarmed by this cartel, as to put a sum equal to fifteen hundred English nobles upon Graham's head.

At Christmas 1436, James went to spend the holidays at Perth, and was there lodged in the Blackfriars' Monastery, without the town walls. As he was upon his journey thither, a Highland woman started

into his way, and told him that if he crossed the Firth of Forth, he never again should return alive. This made some impression on his mind; for he had read a prophecy in a book, that a king of Scots was to be killed that year.* But, on some of his attendants calling the woman but a drunken fool, he passed on without regarding her warning.

On the evening of the 20th of February, he was enjoying himself in the midst of his court, had taken off part of his clothes, and was preparing to retire to rest, when suddenly the clash of arms, the cries of overpowered warders, and the rush of alarmed attendants towards his chamber, broke upon the ear of the monarch. The prophecy, the warning of the Highland woman, and the threats of Sir Robert Graham, were at once remembered. It appears that the female seer had applied that very evening at his chamber door, expressing an eager anxiety to see him, and that she had been refused admittance by the servants. The Queen, who was now with her husband, hastened to see that the doors were fast. But the treachery of a chamberlain, who was privy to the conspiracy, had withdrawn all the bars; and the arm which a lady of the name of Douglas most heroically substituted for one of them, was in a moment snapped by the conspirators. The King, but too well aware of his danger, endeavoured with the energy of desperation to force the stauncheons of the window, in order to escape by that channel, but in vain. He

* The end of the year was at March 25, according to the *practice* which obtained till the year 1600.

then seized a pair of tongs, forced up a board in the floor, and dropped himself into a vault below, the nature of which promised a chance of safety. When the conspirators entered, they found the Queen standing, as it were, fixed to the floor, her agitation so great as to deprive her of speech, and her looks like those of a maniac. One of the ruffians wounded her with his bill, and would have taken her life, but for the interposition of a son of Graham, who called out that they came not to war upon women.

The board raised by the King having been dropped into its proper place by one of the Queen's attendants, the conspirators could find no trace of him, though every article of furniture in the room was overturned, and not a single corner or cranny left unsearched. At length they retired into other rooms, and for a space left this important chamber in quiet. James, then conceiving that the danger was past, and being impatient to escape from his disagreeable place of refuge, called to the women to bring sheets, and pull him up. They did so, and in the attempt one fell down into the vault. This causing some noise, a traitor, who happened to know the arrangement of the rooms, and who was as yet close by, at once conceived where the King was, brought a torch to the opening in the floor, and called out to his companions that he had at length found out the bride they had been searching for all night; some of the conspirators having given out, that the purpose of this enterprise was only to carry away one of the court ladies. Thereupon all within hearing came back to the King's room, and

one, styled Sir John Hall, leapt down into the vault with a large knife in his hand. James, catching the moment when this knight sunk upon the floor, threw him down beneath his feet. A second descending, was treated in the same manner by the King ; and the gripe of the royal hand upon their throats was so violent as to leave the marks for a month. It was in vain, however, that the King strove to possess himself of one of their weapons : he only got his hands cut by the attempt, and lost the energy which he might have reserved for a deadlier struggle.

Just as the King, who, it must be remarked, was a somewhat large and heavy man, was waxing faint with his exertions, his sworn enemy, the vengeful Graham, descended upon him. When the monarch saw this terrible apparition, his spirit quailed, and he called for mercy. "Thou cruel tyrant," cried the avenger, "thou never hadst mercy of even those born of thy blood, nor of any others that came within thy danger : therefore no mercy shalt thou have here !"—"Then, at least," exclaimed the miserable King, "let me have a confessor for the good of my soul."—"Thou shalt have no other," answered Graham, "than this sword ;" and with that he thrust his weapon repeatedly through his victim's body, the King repeatedly crying, while life remained, that he would give him half his kingdom for life. Graham, it is said, was at length so far moved by the King's cries, as to stay his hand ; but his companions above threatened to take his own life if he should spare that of the King, and he was forced to conclude his bloody work. Sixteen wounds were

afterwards found in James's breast alone, without counting those in other parts of his body.

Thus fell James the First, a victim evidently to the indiscretion with which he used faculties of a very high order, and to the vices of cruelty and avarice: for with no less is he universally charged by the writers of his own time. His murderers, among whom turned out to be his paternal uncle, the Earl of Athol, were put to death, at the instance of his widow, with tortures similar to what are related of the North American savages, and such as occur at no other period of Scottish history, even the most barbarous.*

* It may perhaps excite wonder that I have not given the usual warm colour to the character of this king. I can only say, that I have adopted the character which was constantly given of him in his own age, and which the facts of his life justify, when we subtract the glitter which has been thrown over them in modern times by poetical prepossessions.

CHAPTER V.

JAMES II.—JAMES III.

JAMES I. by his wife Jane, daughter of the Duke of Somerset, and great-granddaughter of Edward III. left one son James, a child of six years, besides six daughters, the most of whom were older.* It is supposed (but the imperfect chronicles of the times render the point very obscure) that, some time before his death, he made an arrangement by which his widow was to enjoy the regency in the event of his leaving a

* By James's daughters, four of whom were married to different Continental sovereigns, his blood is at this time found in every royal family in Europe. His eldest daughter Margaret was married to the Dauphin of France, afterwards Louis XI. but had an unhappy fate. Being gifted with her father's taste for literature, she abandoned almost every duty of her station for the composition of poetry; became, indeed, to use a modern phrase, a perfect *blue-stocking*. It is related of her that, for the sake of indulging her poetical reveries, she scarcely ever dressed herself as other women do, but appeared in a perpetual *deshabille*. Her enthusiasm, moreover, led her on one occasion to kiss the lips of a court-poet as he lay asleep, telling her courtiers that she did so in honour of the mouth which had uttered so many fine things. She at last excited the voice of scandal by her slipshod and careless behaviour, and died of a calumny propagated against her, at the early age of twenty-two.

minor heir; and accordingly we find it was by the energy of that princess that his murderers were so promptly seized and punished. Almost immediately, however, a new arrangement appears in the dim records of this reign: the young king is entrusted to the keeping of Sir Alexander Livingstone, of Callendar, and the government to Sir William Crichton, the Chancellor of the kingdom; while the Queen-mother, for the sake of the protection necessary to a female of rank in that age, finds it necessary to marry a stout baron, Sir James Stuart, called the *Black Knight of Lorn*.

Livingstone and Crichton, as their names do not previously appear in history, are generally allowed to have been men of secondary rank, raised to eminence by James I. on account of their abilities. That such they were is very probable, as we find them immediately engaged in contentions with the higher nobility. The Earl of Douglas was particularly displeased with their elevation, and at once renounced their authority. This noble family, it will be remembered, had first come to distinction on account of its adherence to Bruce. Afterwards, as it increased in power, it happened by marriages to attain some obscure pretension to the honour of combining the claims of the families of Cumyn and Baliol. Having, by success in the French wars, further obtained the Duchy of Terouaine, in that country, it had now reached a degree of power and pride much too great for a subject of the Scottish crown, especially during the weakness of a minority. Indeed the history of the whole reign of

James II. so far as it is known, is chiefly a history of the struggle which this family maintained against the royal authority.

There was one fortunate characteristic of the Douglasses, that in general they were not men of eminent sagacity or talent. Hence, formidable as they were from their command of vassals to form an army, their contests with the King's Governors was little better than a contest of brute strength against political address. This was strongly exemplified in the fate of Earl William, who acceded to the honours in 1439. The Chancellor Crichton contrived, by fair promises, to wile this stripling into the Castle of Edinburgh, very much after the manner of a cunning European betraying a formidable Indian chief. The young Earl and his brother, by whom he was accompanied, expected to be introduced to the King at a grand banquet. Instead of a banquet, a black bull's head is said to have been brought in and set down before them at table; an ancient signal of doom. They were hurried to the court-yard, there subjected to a mock trial on the score of treasons committed by their vassals, and immediately beheaded. This horrid transaction occasioned a popular rhyme, in which the scene where it took place was anathematised in very emphatic language :

“ Edinburgh Castle, toune, and toure,
God grant thou sink for sin !
And that even for the black dinoure
Erle Douglas gat therein.”

To this unfortunate Earl succeeded an aged uncle, who is said to have been so fat as to be unable to rise from bed all the time he enjoyed the dignity.* The terrors of the family were further abated on this occasion, by a great portion of the estates going to a female heir-at-law. Such a state of things was extremely favourable to the government; but, unfortunately, it was not of long continuance.

The fat Earl, having died in 1442, was succeeded by his son, a person of considerable activity of character, who immediately proceeded, by marrying his cousin, called the *Fair Maid of Galloway*, to re-unite the family estates. He then commenced a kind of war with Crichton and Livingstone, in which fortune gave him the victory. He procured the utter ruin of the latter statesman, deprived the other of all power except that connected with his office of Chancellor, and, constituting himself Lieutenant-General of the kingdom, began to rule in the King's name. He continued in possession of this power for several years, during which occurred the battle of the Sark (1448), where he gained a noted victory over an invading party of English. At length, the King approaching to manhood, and Sir William Crichton recovering some share of influence, the usurped authority of Douglas began to decline before a series of politic measures chiefly devised by that statesman, and he finally thought it prudent to retire. About the same time (1450), King

* "They say he had in him foure stane of talch (*tallow*) and mair." *Old Chronicle*.

James was married to a daughter of the house of Gueldres, in France, with whom he got a large dowry. The character of the King, now fully grown up, was found to be manly and energetic ; his form was also robust, but his visage was much spoilt by a large red mark upon one of his cheeks, which caused him to be nicknamed the *King with the fiery face*.

In the year 1450, the Earl of Douglas relieved the kingdom of his presence for a little, by making a pilgrimage to Rome to witness the religious jubilee which then took place. In his absence, some of his vassals presumed upon the strength of his name to break the laws ; and James did not scruple at once to march against them and inflict summary punishment. When Douglas heard of this, he hastened home in great wrath, and attempted to revenge himself by waylaying the Chancellor, who, as he perceived, was the real cause of the insult. Crichton, however, evaded him, and he was obliged to retire in high indignation to his castles in the country. He there formed a league with some discontented Earls in the north, for the purpose of braving the royal authority, and committed a number of minor acts of violence calculated to rouse the anger of the King.

James, who seems to have entertained a sincere desire of maintaining good government in his dominions, was greatly distressed by the turbulent behaviour of this nobleman. Resolving, however, to try the effect of fair words before he should resort to a more hazardous trial, he invited the Earl to hold a conference in Stirling Castle ; but did not, as some

authors have asserted, give a safe conduct for the assurance of the turbulent noble and his train. Notwithstanding that the circumstances might have reminded Douglas of the fate of his cousin, and although he might have easily perceived that to maintain his treasonous designs, and argue upon them with his sovereign in his sovereign's court, were incompatible, he accepted this ill-omened invitation. The result was just what might have been expected. An altercation arose at dinner; and Douglas insolently avowing that he would not break his engagement with the northern Earls, James stabbed him in a fit of passion, saying, that if no other thing could break that unlawful compact, it should be done with his dagger. The Earl then received stabs or blows from all who were present, in compliance with a custom which seems to have obtained through many ages of Scottish history, arising out of a notion very likely to suggest itself in a rude age, that a crime, by being dissipated over a great number, was in some measure lessened to each individual, while the possibility of any one present acting afterwards as an accuser or a witness, was also done away with.*

That James was only actuated by sudden passion in this deed, is evident from its imprudence. Five brothers, one of whom instantly became Earl of Douglas, while the other three were peers under different titles, survived to revenge the foul act. It was

* This notion seems to have obtained in the assassinations of James I., of Rizzio, and of the *bonnie* Earl of Moray.

apt, also, to cause much of the popular favour to desert the king's side for that of the Douglasses ; not, perhaps, from any abstract horror for the murder, for the deed was too consonant to the spirit and practice of the age to excite such a feeling, but from a sensation of sympathy for a family of which two young and interesting representatives had successively met a hard fate.*

Accordingly, we find that the struggle between the two rival families, as they might be called, had now reached its climax. One set of nobles fairly ranked themselves upon one side, and another on another. After a great number of bloody encounters, chiefly in the north, the king took the decisive step of beleaguering Abercorn Castle, one of the principal strongholds of the hostile noble, who forthwith advanced with an army of forty thousand men to raise the siege. The king's heart is said to have been about this time so much depressed, that he sometimes spoke of quitting his dominions, and taking refuge in the country of Gueldres. He was fortunately prevented from doing so by his cousin, James Kennedy, Bishop of St. Andrews, a sagacious dignitary, who, after the death of Crichton, had become his chief counsellor. In this

* It is a curious trait of the age, that James afterwards entered a solemn protest in Parliament against the popular scandals which represented him as having committed the slaughter under a safe conduct. From the tenor of this strange document, it is not observable that the monarch cared for the scandal of the murder : he was only anxious that no one should suppose him capable of such an act *under trust*.

man's eye there were weak points in Douglas, which were invisible to the king.

One of the chief confederates of Douglas in this expedition was a baron of the name of Hamilton, a man of no high historical lineage, but who had in recent times acquired considerable estates in Clydesdale. This leader, having some reason to be disgusted with Douglas, was prevailed upon by Kennedy to desert his chief, and carry three hundred spears over to the king, the very day before a decisive engagement was expected to take place. It was not three hundred spears alone that he carried with him; he bore away credit, reputation, and good counsel from the earl. Actuated by his example, a great number of those partizans who watch for omens, or, as Oliver Cromwell used to say, wait upon Providence, also went over to the king. Many others were induced, by this rapid decay of the ranks, also, to retire! In the morning, when Douglas rose to address himself to battle, he found, where forty thousand men had lain the day before, little more than his own clan and immediate retainers. The ascendancy of the family of Stuart was ~~fixed~~ by this incident. Douglas retired in despair, took refuge in England, and became a landless and attainted man. The baron who first deserted him, afterwards rose in a great measure on his ruins, and became the founder of the ducal house of Hamilton; which now enjoys the premier peerage of Scotland. The title and power of the house of Douglas now disappears from the history of Scotland, like a noble river which is suddenly swallowed up in the earth, when at the

very proudest point of its career. A secondary branch of the family, which had sided with the King in this struggle, partook largely of its spoils, and henceforth rises into importance. Under the well-known title of Angus, it occupies a broad space in the ensuing chapters of our history.

The destruction of this family took place in 1455, when the king was in the very vigour of youth ; and, for five years after, the country was governed in such a style as showed that nothing was wanting but an adult and energetic ruler to preserve internal peace. Unfortunately, towards the end of that period, James was tempted by the dissensions of England, or perhaps by the machinations of the house of York against himself, to make an incursion over the border, and afterwards to lay siege to Roxburgh Castle. This fortress, and the town and castle of Berwick, had originally been in possession of the Scots, within whose territories they lay ; but since the unfortunate wars with Edward I., they had generally been in the hands of the English ; and James probably thought the present a good opportunity for winning them back. He was superintending the arrangement of his artillery before the walls of Roxburgh, when one of the rude engines happened to burst in going off, and a fragment striking the king upon the thigh, caused almost instantaneous death by the effusion of blood. This respectable monarch died in the twenty-ninth year of his age, and twenty-fourth of his reign, leaving his throne to a child of six years, and his country to the prospect of another ruinous minority.

The conduct of the widowed queen on this occasion was exceedingly noble. Immediately on hearing the tidings, she hurried to the camp with her eldest son, presented him to the soldiers as their new sovereign, and with tears implored them not to desist from their enterprise till they had destroyed the fortress which had already cost them so dear. The host caught fresh energy from her manner, and, renewing their attacks upon the castle, soon caused it to surrender. It was immediately dismantled, so as to be unfit for ever again sheltering an enemy against Scotland. Homage was at the same time done to the young king in the neighbouring abbey church of Kelso, as an interim ceremony, till such time as his coronation could be performed at Scone.

It might have been expected, from the energy displayed by the Queen under such unhappy circumstances, that she should have averted a great deal of the usual evils of a minority. Unfortunately, however, though abounding in piety, the grand virtue of that age—though a founder of churches and hospitals, and also a woman of considerable sense and courage—Mary of Guelderland was not believed to be a lady of pure life, and consequently did not enjoy the respect of the country. On this account her good qualities were completely lost to her son, who, at an early age, fell under the control of favourites.

The history of this reign is a good deal mixed with that of England. The house of York had now succeeded in expelling Henry VI. from the throne, to which, it must be allowed, he had an inferior right by

birth. The successful family, as already hinted, had constantly regarded the king of Scotland as an enemy; had made leagues with his rebellious nobles against him—especially with Douglas and the Lord of the Isles; and had even entered into an arrangement for conquering the northern kingdom by help of these personages, for the purpose of dividing it between them, under a reservation of the English claim of homage. James II., as a matter of course, had befriended the house of Lancaster; and now that that family was ruined and homeless, Scotland received its various members—the imbecile Henry himself, his heroic wife, and his son Edward—into its bosom. They lived for a long time at the town of Kirkcudbright, on the Solway Firth.

It is curious to observe the compact made on this occasion between the Lord of the Isles and the King of England; for it was exactly a miniature parody of the conduct of the kings of Scotland, when their independence was threatened by England. The Lord of the Isles, it must be observed, was just as independent of the King of Scots, as the latter had ever been of the King of England; his sovereignty in that narrow space had been from the earliest times separate from that of Scotland; it was just as distinct and unique as that of Denmark, Norway, or any other neighbouring State. This being understood, it must be clear that when James I. endeavoured to subjugate the Lord of the Isles, he played the part of an Edward I., that the attempts of James II. were parallel with those of Edward II. and III., and that the Lord of the Isles, in forming

leagues with England for the maintenance and extension of his authority, just did what had been done by the Scottish kings, when they entered into treaties with France against England. The very political reasons were the same. As Edward wished to reduce Scotland for the sake of securing peace in that quarter, at the same time that he enlarged his dominions, so did the Scottish monarchs entertain the hope of extending their rule, and consolidating their realm, by taking in the isles. Such a speculation as this is apt to put to flight a great many national associations, and weaken very considerably the enthusiasm of local feeling. It should not, however, be blinked or overlooked. We yet recount with pride the struggles made by our ancestors against English aggression, and no lay is sung with such fervid feeling as that which records their ultimate success; but what should we say to a Gaelic poem, detailing the efforts made by the Hebrideans to preserve their independence against those cruel usurpers, the kings of Scotland, and at last bewailing, in the most touching language, the catastrophe of their final subjection?

The efforts made by the Scottish government in favour of the unfortunate Henry, were too weak to be of any effect against Edward IV. It was therefore found prudent to make a treaty of peace with that sovereign in 1463. Next year one of those incidents occurred, which is apt to make a minor state assume a kind of triumph over a more powerful neighbour. The Duke of Albany, younger brother of James III. being sent to complete his education in France, was

seized as he passed through England, and like his ancestor James I. carried prisoner to London. Bishop Kennedy, grand-uncle to the young King, and one of his governors, took on this occasion the bold step of sending a herald to the English court, carrying a request for the deliverance of the Duke in one hand, and a declaration of war in the other; the consequence of which was, that Edward released his prisoner, with an apology. It would appear that the English king at this time meditated an invasion of France, and was anxious, as usual, to secure the good will of Scotland before setting out.

The prelate who has just been named was enabled, during the first few years of this reign, to give his country the benefits of his extraordinary sagacity, and preserve a shadow of good government in the land. But he died in 1466, and James then fell entirely under the power of the Boyds, an ambitious and grasping family, who sought nothing but their own aggrandisement. Sir Thomas Boyd caused himself to be created Earl of Arran, and procured Mary, the King's eldest sister, in marriage. To increase the regret with which the people beheld these disorders, it turned out, as James advanced to the years of manhood, that he was as imbecile as his father and grandfather had been the reverse, and seemed as if he should never be fit to conduct his government without the assistance of some unworthy favourite. He manifested a taste for music, architecture, and for meaner arts, such as tailoring and dancing: but showed no *inclination* to hunting, hawking, the tournament, or

any other of those warlike amusements which the prejudices of his age esteemed alone fit for a man of rank. What was worst of all, he not only gave his attention to studies then considered unworthy of a king, but he adopted as his chief familiars the low-born persons whom he employed for the gratification of his favourite propensities. Thus, after the Boyds had, by the influence of an opposite faction, been deposed and banished, an architect named Cochran, an English musician of the name of Rogers, and one Hommil a tailor, became his chief intimates. No conduct could have been more apt to alienate the affections of a military and somewhat rude nation from their sovereign.

James III. was fortunate in one transaction of his life. He married Margaret, a daughter of the King of Denmark, thereby adding to his dominions the islands of Orkney and Shetland, which came as her dowry, and at the same time attaching to his counsels an affectionate and prudent wife. He was eminently unfortunate in other relations. He had two brothers, Alexander and John, the former of whom had been created Duke of Albany by his father, and gifted with immense possessions in East Lothian and Berwickshire, while the latter was endowed with the title of Earl of Mar. These young men, without the mild virtues of the King, possessed all the popular qualities in which he was deficient, and enjoying, besides, much real power, soon became exceedingly formidable to their elder brother. One of them was cut off by accidental death, in a career of ambition di-

rected against the King ; but the survivor, Alexander, lived to annoy him during almost all the rest of his reign.

The situation of Scotland, in regard to England and France, now becomes exceedingly obscure, probably from the intriguing character of at least one of the sovereigns. James at one time enters into a truce for fifty-four years with England, and agrees to marry his son to the daughter of Edward IV. accepting at the same time a pension from that monarch, but disguised as an anticipatory payment of the princess's portion. At another time he is found in arms against Edward, and on good terms with France. His conduct seems to have been very much actuated by the intrigues of his brother Alexander. That prince having fled to France, and entered into a compact with Louis XI. for dethroning his brother, James became jealous of France. Afterwards, on the Duke of Albany proffering to make the same bargain with the English king, James is found preparing for war with England.

The Earl of Albany is a great favourite with the old Scottish historians, who, living in a time when military accomplishments were still appreciated above all others, looked only to his superiority over the King in that respect, without perhaps being fully aware of his base practices. Lindsay of Pitscottie fondly describes him as "hardy, manly, and wise;" adding a portraiture of his person, which was no doubt intended to make the reader fall in love with him, whatever may now be thought of it. "He was

of mid stature," says this primitive annalist, "broad-shouldered, and well proportioned in all his members, and especially in his face; that is to say, he was *broad-faced, red-nosed, great-eared, and of very awful countenance, when he pleased to show himself to his unfriends.*" It is now proved by incontestible state documents, which were not accessible to the old historians, that this prince was in reality a Scottish Duke of Gloucester, disposed to represent his brother as illegitimate, and seeking on that plea to become his substitute on the throne. That he was utterly unprincipled, is proved by his attempting to cast off his wife, in order to form another marriage, which promised to be more advantageous to his fortunes. He is also proved to have not been what the prejudices of his country were then disposed to call a patriot; for he made a compact with Edward IV. engaging to accept the sovereignty of Scotland from him, on the terms which Edward I. made with John Baliol; that is, to acknowledge his kingdom a fief held of the kings of England.

This prince having been apprehended and imprisoned by King James, escaped in 1479 to France, and afterwards coming to England in 1482, entered into a contract to the above purpose. James was made aware in 1478, by the stoppage of his pension, that Edward disregarded his friendship, and he now, therefore, had the less scruple to break the peace with his southern neighbours. Raising an army of forty thousand men, he advanced to Lauder, intending to invade England. There, however, he was arrested by an in-

surrection among his nobility, who, seizing his upstart favourites, hanged them all over a bridge near the camp, and immediately after committed the weak monarch to a sort of honourable confinement in Edinburgh Castle.

At this crisis, Albany entered the country with an English army under the command of Richard of Gloucester, and proceeded to take a leading share in the government, though he still found it inadvisable to usurp the royal dignity. The nobles seem to have permitted him to act for a certain time as regent, his birth giving him a kind of title to the lieutenancy of the kingdom. During this space, probably for the purpose of concealing his designs from the King, he busied himself to procure his liberation. This being effected by the assistance of the citizens of Edinburgh, we are told that the two brothers, in token of reconciliation, rode on one horse from the King's prison to his palace—that is along the principal street of Edinburgh—in the presence of the people. This hypocrisy, however, was soon after seen through; and on perceiving some inclination on the part of the nobles to restore full power to the King, he fled to England, and was forfeited.

Albany made but one other effort to acquire an ascendancy in Scotland. It was in company with the forfeited Earl of Douglas, who had now been exiled for thirty years. They entered the west border with about five hundred horse, were surrounded by a few of the former vassals of the Earl, and discomfited. Albany escaped by means of his good steed; but Doug-

las was seized and brought before the King. There, either from shame or scorn, the last of the Douglasses turned his back upon the son of James II.—the destroyer of his house, and whose throne he had once seemed on the point of reaching. A ray of pity touched the heart of the King, who had himself known misfortune, and he only sentenced his aged enemy to seclusion in the monastery of Lindores. Douglas bitterly remarked, as he heard his fate pronounced, “He that may no better be, must be a monk ;” and he died after four years of retirement. With him perished by far the most powerful house of nobility which ever existed in Scotland. The Duke of Albany afterwards died in France, leaving a son John, who was destined to bear a conspicuous figure in a future age of Scottish history.

James was thus freed from the machinations of his two brothers, who, he had been told by soothsayers, were destined to cause his destruction. Yet neither his government, nor, as it afterwards appeared, his life, were secured. The grand causes of popular discontent still remained in his own character—addiction to mean favourites and unkingly amusements, to avarice and superstition. James III., it is to be feared, was characterised by many of those disqualifications for governing which afterwards lost his family the throne. He seems to have merely been, like Charles I., a man of refined taste and pure life, while deficient in the gifts which go to the composition of a popular ruler, and strongly inclined to govern upon narrow and arbitrary principles.

It is gratifying, in an early and rude age like this, to find traces of the exercise of public opinion in opposition to a tyrannical monarch. In such terms must a confederacy be described, which now took effect against the King of Scotland. It was composed of the chief nobility of the southern districts, especially of the powerful families of Hume and Hepburn, who had a personal wrong to avenge, in addition to public injuries ; for James, to support a chapel-royal which he erected in his favourite palace of Stirling, had appropriated the revenues attached to the vacant office of prior of Coldingham Abbey, to which it had hitherto been customary to appoint a Hume and a Hepburn alternately. This association soon became so formidable, that the King found it necessary to retire into the north to seek assistance. But before doing so, he committed the charge of his eldest son James, now a youth of fifteen, to Shaw of Sauchie, the keeper of Stirling Castle.

In his absence upon this business, the confederate lords approached Stirling, and prevailed upon Shaw to surrender the Prince to their keeping, thereby supplying themselves with an excellent rallying point for their enterprise. Artfully setting forth that the King, who was suspected of having acted an unnatural part to two brothers, entertained wicked designs regarding his own son, they earnestly besought the people to rise up for the succour of the injured youth. This was a kind of pious fraud ; for, to do James justice, it cannot be made to appear that he was a bad father. But men engaged in the best and most popu-

talions, accompanied by a tremendous yell, alarmed the timid breast of the King, hitherto accustomed only to the sounds of measured music. He turned and fled towards the Forth, where he had some vessels lying at anchor, which he thought might afford him refuge. The Highlanders, beat back by the borderers, gave way at the same time; and the day was lost to the royalist party, though not to the extent of a complete rout.

James fled along the field of Bannockburn at the full speed of his horse, and was approaching a mill near the village of St. Ninians, when a woman happened to come out to draw water at a neighbouring well, and seeing an armed horseman galloping rapidly towards her, threw down her pitcher in great alarm, and retreated with all speed to her house. The King's horse took alarm at the pitcher thus cast away, jumped aslant over the rivulet which ran along the way-side, and threw the unhappy monarch senseless upon the ground before the door of the mill. Being carried into that place by the humble inmates, and gradually recovering his senses, he was asked regarding his name and quality. "Alas!" replied he, mournfully, "I was your King this morning;" and he expressed a desire of having a priest brought to him. The miller's wife now ran out to the road, wringing her hands, and calling for a priest to the King. A party of the insurgents came up at that moment. One stepped forward and said, "I am a priest—where is the King?" Being conducted to the place where James was lying, he knelt down by his side, and in-

lar causes, have often found it necessary to hold up some broader and grosser object than the real one to the eyes of the populace, for the purpose of producing the desired effect.

James was successful in his recruiting tour to the north. The Highlanders, though recently, and as yet imperfectly reduced to the authority of his family, followed him to the number of at least ten thousand, armed in their rude way with bows and arrows, daggers, and broad-swords. It is strange to see the parallel between James III. and the later Stuarts hold good in this point. A despotic King is in both instances found able to secure the least civilized part of the nation. Hence, it may be argued, that there is a fixed affinity between despotism and barbarism; and that, in seeking to produce an amelioration of the government, it is from the remote provinces that a nation has most cause to dread a reaction. James also secured the aid of various barons of the north-east district of Scotland, so that his army altogether numbered about thirty thousand.

The opposing parties met at Sauchie, a spot situated about a mile south from the field of Bannockburn. The royal host was fully out-numbered by the insurgents; on whose side also was the best discipline, and the most animating cause. They carried with them the King's eldest son, in virtue of whose name they displayed the royal banner. On the 11th of June, 1488, the host met in deadly fight, and were pressing against each other with various effect, when a furious charge made by the borderers against the royal bat-

and took disingenuous methods of procuring it, only to squander it, if he spent it at all, upon mean artizans. Upon the whole, James III. must be held, amidst all the obscurity which surrounds him, as one of the least respectable of his family—whose weak points are perhaps all concentrated in him.

CHAPTER VI.

JAMES IV.

A FOURTH James now succeeded to the Scottish throne, and one destined to play a more manly and vigorous part than the preceding. This personage, at the time of his father's death, was upwards of fifteen years of age; a youth of excellent dispositions and great promise. Having supplied a name and cause to the insurgents who triumphed over his father, it was natural that they should immediately adopt him as their king, and become his principal advisers. But though thus admitted to the crown by the consent and endeavour of a party which had rebelled against his father's misgovernment, it does not appear that any terms were exacted from him as to his own course of policy. The insurgent chiefs seem to have contented themselves with a few parliamentary statutes favourable to their own personal dignity, and with the satisfaction of forming his court and cabinet. Their triumph was used with moderation in regard to the party which had espoused the cause of the late king.

The young monarch was himself bitterly grieved for the incident which had placed a crown upon his head. Having been all along carried with the rebels

only as a pageant, and not from any wish on his own part, it was with serious grief that, after some little time, he ascertained the death of his father. The insurgent nobles are said to have found it a difficult task to induce him to look upon them with any complacency after this event had become known to him, or to enter into their views as to the future management of the country. He blamed himself as being guilty of the crime of parricide; and no efforts, even on the part of very high churchmen, could convince him of the contrary. By way of penance, he ever after carried an iron girdle round his middle, to the weight of which he made an addition every year; and he spent a great part of his time in pilgrimages and fasts; he even contemplated an expedition to Jerusalem, as an atonement for this involuntary crime.

The character of the new king was in other respects gay and generous. He was much addicted to shows of arms and chivalrous games, indulged greatly in licentious amours, was a musician; a patron, if not a composer of poetry; and had an eccentric habit of travelling in disguise among his people, to acquaint himself with their manners, and see that the inferior officers of the state did their duty. The treasures amassed by his father he spent in courtly amusements for the entertainment of his nobles, being convinced that the affection of those personages was indispensable to his welfare. Judging him altogether as a king, it may be said that, but for a chivalrous mania which misdirected him in matters of war, and an unreasonable jealousy of England, he would have been

an exceedingly worthy, and, in all probability, a prosperous monarch.

In the beginning of this reign we hear for the first time of any such thing as a naval force in Scotland. One Andrew Wood, who, it appears, was much attached to the late King, possessed two armed vessels which now began to be famous for their exploits. Two English vessels having entered the Firth of Forth, and committed some depredations upon the Scottish merchantmen, Wood was commissioned by the King to go out and fight them. With his two little vessels he overtook the flotilla of the enemy opposite Dunbar, engaged it, and, after a sanguinary battle, brought the vessels into Leith. James rewarded him suitably for this gallant action.

When Henry VII. heard of what had taken place, he was so much chagrined as to offer a handsome yearly income to any one who should revenge him suitably upon the Scottish admiral. One Stephen Bull adventured to do so; and being provided with three stout ships, set sail, and lay in wait for Wood at the back of the Isle of May, which lies at the mouth of the Firth of Forth, thirty miles from Edinburgh. Wood soon after coming up, an engagement took place, which was continued with equal fury on both sides for a whole day, till the wind and tide had carried them all the way from the opening of the Firth of Forth to the mouth of the Firth of Tay, where, at length, the action was terminated in favour of the Scots. Wood carried his prizes into Dundee, and hastened to bring the English commander to the feet of his sovereign. James sent

this person back to Henry, with presents, and a message, stating, that Scotland having men who could fight by sea as well as by land, it was necessary that the English King should not provoke them again on that element, as the fate of the next individuals so taken might not be so gentle. Yet there is great reason for supposing that Wood was only an adventurer upon his own risk, though perhaps occasionally honoured with commissions by his sovereign.

Henry VII., a monarch whose cautious politic character contrasted in the strongest manner with the chivalrous impetuosity of the Scottish king, was in reality by no means anxious to provoke a quarrel with him. It seems to have rather been the wish of this wily sovereign to make James an ally and a friend. The antipathy of James to England has already been mentioned; probably it had no other foundation than mere jealousy of a kingdom superior to his own—that natural sentiment which makes man always hate what wounds his self-love, or diminishes him in his own eyes. It was the task of Henry, and one more truly worthy he could scarcely have engaged in, to conciliate this irritable and wayward spirit to views useful for both countries. Thinking that no means could be so effectual as a matrimonial alliance, he early conceived the design of wedding the Scottish king to a princess of the blood royal of England. Negotiations to this effect were actually entered into in 1493, but were unfortunately broken off by the caprice of the Scottish monarch, whose prejudices led him to prefer a French match. Nevertheless, when

James afterwards set a negotiation on foot with that court, Henry found means to get it broken off, and for some years he at least contrived to keep his Scottish neighbour unmarried.

The policy of Henry, whether designed for a selfish purpose or otherwise, was long in winning upon the untractable spirit of King James. In the summer of 1496, we find the latter receiving and acknowledging the pretender Perkin Warbeck, and even projecting a war against England for the assertion of that person's supposed rights in opposition to King Henry. It is scarcely necessary to trace the history of this impostor. He was a puppet set up by Elizabeth Duchess of Burgundy, sister of the late princes of the house of York, to represent the younger son of Edward IV., who, in reality, had been some years before murdered in the Tower, at the command of Richard III. It was perhaps the quarter from which he came that chiefly recommended him to James's faith and attention. So complete was this faith at first, that James bestowed upon him, in marriage, a young lady of his own blood, daughter to the Earl of Huntly. He afterwards led an expedition into England in favour of the impostor; but finding no encouragement among the people, was speedily induced to retire. Henry, with surprising moderation, took scarcely any notice of this aggression, though it is said that Northumberland suffered very much from the Scottish soldiery. He soon after negotiated a seven-years' truce with Scotland.

In the mean time, from the comparative absence of

war during the preceding reigns, Scotland was beginning to display symptoms of wealth and importance, such as were not visible either a century before or a century later. The external commerce with France and Flanders was now considerable. The internal manufactures, as is apparent from the numerous incorporations of artizans in every burgh, were also far from trifling. A rude taste for luxuries prevailed to a great extent, as is evident from the writings of the poets ; and learning was making considerable advances. In addition to the university established at St. Andrews in 1410, a similar institution had been opened at Glasgow in 1453, and another was now founded at Aberdeen. The consequence attached to learning by the legislature is evidenced by a statute in 1494, ordaining that all gentlemen shall put their sons to school, so that they may have sufficient learning to act the part of country magistrates. The progress which the *belles lettres* had now made is also surprising. Gavin Douglas, of the Angus family, William Dunbar, and a host of other persons, chiefly of rank or of literary professions, now wrote poetry in the native language ; which, if it could be rendered readily intelligible to the present generation, might be still admired and popular.

The splendour of the court was, in itself, not the least striking symptom of the prosperity of the country. James, it has been already remarked, spent much of his time in pious offices for the expiation of his father's death ; it must be further allowed, against the credit of his intellect, that he was extremely

superstitious ; yet it never appears, in the midst of his penances and pilgrimages, some of which last he would perform on foot, and to great distances, that he in the least intermitted his propensity to courtly sports and courtly vices. His book of current expenses contains a strange jumble of offerings at the shrines of saints, alms to palmers, and so forth, mingled with sums for the hiring of "dauncing maydens," and "menstrallis," for the purchase of fine clothes and weapons, and the furnishing of voluptuous banquets. There can be no doubt that his court was by many degrees the gayest and grandest known in Scotland before the union of its crown to that of England.

Lindsay, a historian who lived not long after this time, informs us that James "loved nothing-so well as able men and good horse." The reason was, that he took more delight in the tournament than in any other amusement. He held frequent justings, as they were called, sitting on the lofty walls of Edinburgh Castle, while the knights contended in the deep valley below. It was his custom on such occasions to give prizes in the shape of weapons ; the weapon, in each case, corresponding with that used by the successful champion. And so famous at last did the court of Scotland become on this account, that knights used to come from distant countries to compete for the prizes. It must have been a strange sight to see splendid games of this kind at the barras under Edinburgh Castle, while the King, surrounded by his court, sat at least two hundred feet of almost perpendicular height above the spot, occasionally flinging his hat down the face of the rock when he thought

the contention was proceeding to too dangerous an extreme—for such, it seems, was his custom.

It has been mentioned that King James, entertaining in early life a strong aversion to England, liked better to hear of a match with some French princess, than with any one belonging to what he was pleased to consider the ancient and natural enemy of his country. It would appear that the advance of years, and the influence of King Henry's gentle policy, at length did away with much of these prejudices, and induced him to listen to a matrimonial proposal from that quarter. In 1503, when he was about thirty years of age, and when Lady Margaret, eldest daughter of King Henry VII., was approaching fourteen, a negociation for a match with that princess, who had been offered to him in infancy, and rejected, was finally brought to an issue. Henry entertained very just views upon this subject. When his council remonstrated with him about his intentions, and represented that, in the event of his two sons dying without issue, the Scottish posterity of this daughter might succeed to the English crown, and render England an appanage of their own poor state, he answered that, in such an event, England would in reality make prey of Scotland, as it was the more important country, and must become the seat of government for both. The justice of his argument was proved exactly a century after; when, as predicted, his daughter's great grandson, James VI., did actually succeed to the English crown, on the failure of posterity from his two sons. Henry VII. must therefore be held as entitled to the very highest praise which

can attach to a sovereign, for projecting a scheme which contained within itself the germ of so many remote benefits to his country.

As James and Margaret were related to each other through Edward III., it was necessary to procure a dispensation from the Pope for their nuptials. Not only was this at once granted, but Julius II., who then enjoyed the pontificate, marked his respect for the Scottish monarch, by presenting him with a consecrated hat and sword ; the latter of which yet forms part of the Scottish regalia. The preliminaries were then settled, that Margaret was to have a dowry of thirty thousand angel-nobles (£10,000), that she was to have the usual dotarial lands in Scotland for her jointure, and a thousand pounds Scottish money annually for her private purse, and that the town of Berwick-upon-Tweed was to be finally rendered up as part of the English dominions. At the same time a perpetual peace was concluded between the two countries, being the first since the year 1332 ; all other intervals of war since that period having been merely truces.

After all proper formalities had been gone through, the princess was convoyed into Scotland by a grand cavalcade of English courtiers, under the conduct of the Earl of Surrey. She was married to James's proxy at Lamerton kirk, the first holy place which she came to in Scottish ground ; and there she was also taken under charge by a deputation of Scottish courtiers, to the amount of about five hundred. It is acknowledged by the English historians, that, at this meeting of Scottish and English chivalry, the former fairly outdid

the latter in the splendour of their appointments, although among the English were four hundred gentlemen attending on the Earl of Northumberland, each of whom was more like a nobleman than anything else. It is stated, however, at another place, as a set-off against this acknowledgment, that, though the English admired the Scots for their manhood and splendid exterior, they thought them greatly deficient in *nurture* or breeding. Margaret being brought by easy stages to Dalkeith, then a strong castle belonging to the Earl of Morton, James left Edinburgh on a swift horse, and, like a hawk darting on his prey, as one of the princess's attendants* has described him, went out to give her welcome. Their first meeting was of a formal nature, each making profound obeisance before the other, James with his hat in his hand ; but conversation soon banished all timidity on both sides, and at parting James not only kissed his future queen, but also some score of maids of honour whom she had brought with her from England. It is also stated by Young that he entertained her at supper by playing on the lute ; for such was one of the many accomplishments of this gay and elegant prince.

Margaret spent a week at Dalkeith to recruit after her journey, and every day did James come riding out from the neighbouring city to visit her. His conduct on these occasions is minutely detailed by the English herald ; and it certainly was such as to gain him the

* John Young, Somerset herald. A narrative of the whole marriage, written by him, is in Leland's Collections.

credit with his mistress of being a courteous and gallant lover. A circumstance connected with this week of courtship is apt to make a deeply melancholy impression on the mind, as evidencing the uncertainty of all ties of friendship entered into at that time between a Scot and an Englishman. James, it appears, displayed much kindness and respect to the princess's conductor, the Earl of Surrey; and the earl, in return, contracted a great affection for the Scottish monarch. Only ten years after, the English noble led an army against James at Flodden, where the latter fell amidst many thousands of his subjects.

When the nuptial day arrived, James conducted his bride from Dalkeith to Edinburgh, in the midst of a splendid cavalcade, amusing her part of the way by a stag-hunt over the fields. In the neighbourhood of the city her eyes were greeted with a chivalric drama, performed by the way-side, where one knight seized and imprisoned the mistress of another, and a fight ensued for her release; the common incidents of a romantic tale of that day. Before entering the city, James mounted behind on the horse of an attendant, to try if the animal would endure a double load, it being his wish to ride in that primitive fashion into Edinburgh with the princess. But finding this horse a little uneasy and fretful, he procured another, upon which he caused the lady to mount behind him, *en croupe*; and it was actually in this homely arrangement, to which the plainest country people in Scotland will now scarcely condescend, that the two royal personages rode into the town. The object was doubtless

to show affection, as in the similar case of James III. and the Duke of Albany.

Both in the neighbourhood of the town and within its walls, James was met by detachments of friars from the different monastic establishments of the city, who presented relics to be kissed by him, as was no doubt his custom ; but on this occasion, perhaps from a certain feeling of delicacy towards the princess, he put all these things aside without the usual salute. Passing through the city, where a great number of curious devices were put into practice for their amusement, the royal pair reached Holyrood-house, which, in these later periods of the monarchy, had become the chief royal seat in Scotland. There they were finally united next day, amidst the most tumultuous scenes of rejoicing ; every body being glad to see the king at length married, even to the daughter of an ancient enemy.

For some time after this, James had daily tournaments, to which many foreigners of distinction were attracted, and where he himself sometimes appeared under the guise and title of the *Savage Knight*, attended by a number of Highlanders. The English and Continental visitors were surprised to see the Highlanders, in their conflicts, interchange real wounds, and never appear in the least discomposed ; they were also astonished at the sound of the bagpipes, with whose notes the mountaineers accompanied their desperate charges against each other. The exhibition of this wild race was certainly a strange eccentricity in the customs of chivalry, and appears the more strange that it took place in the *games which celebrated a royal wedding*. It seems,

however, to have impressed the English with a salutary respect for the courage of the Scots. In the present age, we are more apt to be delighted with the attempts which the Muses made to celebrate James's auspicious marriage. One of these essays was by the ingenious Dunbar, in the shape of a beautiful allegory, called *the Thistle and the Rose*; a title selected in reference to the well-known emblems of the two countries,* which, according to the poet, were now joined.

The few years following this event glided away in peace and prosperity; but James, for a considerable time, was not so happy as to have children able to survive the perils of infancy. A strange circumstance took place at the birth of his first child in 1507. The Queen being on that occasion alarmingly ill, the King, with his usual superstition, thought that nothing could be so effectual in her favour as a pilgrimage performed on foot to St. Ninians in Galloway, a shrine much resorted to, not only by the people of Scotland, but also those of Ireland, on account of the supposed efficacy of prayers delivered before it. When he came back, the Queen was quite recovered; but the child (a son) soon after died. He had another son next year, who did not survive much longer. A third, born in 1512, and christened by the name of

* England seems to have but a short time before assumed the cognizance of the Rose, no doubt from the emblems used by the rival houses of York and Lancaster. As there is no earlier trace of the Thistle as the Scottish cognizance, I am tempted to believe that it was assumed as a contrast to the rose, and of course *after* that flower had become the English symbol.

James, proved of a stouter frame, and survived to succeed himself, under the title of James V.

A marked expansion of views, as to foreign policy, is now observed to take place in the Scottish government. In the times antecedent to Bruce, it cannot be perceived that Scotland entertained relations with any of the neighbouring states besides England and the Netherlands. The poor raw exports of the country did not bring it into collision with any other ; and, besides its raw exports, it had no means of making itself important. The alliance with France is not of earlier date than the reign of Baliol, when the ambition of the English sovereigns first rendered it necessary. In the century between Robert Bruce and James I. very little trace of any other foreign relations is discovered. In the last-mentioned reign, owing to the adventurous and ambitious spirit of the King, treaties and commercial contracts were made with a number of the lesser continental states, but evidently without procuring for the country any additional weight or consideration in the scale of nations. During the period embracing the reigns of the second and third James, little advance, if any, is made. These sovereigns were too anxiously concerned in attending to domestic broils, to pay much regard to foreign relations. Now, a great change is perceptible. In 1503, when James made his treaty of peace with Henry VII. he is found in alliance with France, Germany, Spain, Denmark, Brandenburg, Cleves, and Alsace ; all being the result, no doubt, of the increased prosperity of the country, and the vigour of the government. And

these alliances were not merely of a commercial character: they seem to have had a regard to something like what was more lately known under the title of the *balance of Europe*. Scotland, indeed, might now be said to have taken a place among the family of European nations, and to have had her word listened to in matters of general concernment as well as the rest. There still survives a collection of the diplomacy of this reign, which so far evidences the fact. It is in the shape of letters by the King to the different potentates in his alliance; and a strain of dignity and consequence, expressed in the most refined Latin, characterises the whole collection.

Among other proofs of the increased wealth and importance of the country, may be reckoned the formation of a national or royal navy, which for the first time took place in the latter part of this reign. James, before he died, possessed sixteen ships of war, one of them two hundred and forty feet long, by fifty-six broad, and carrying thirty-two guns. This must be considered the more remarkable, when it is recollected that 1503 is the era of the English navy; all vessels employed before that year for warlike purposes, being merchant-men hired by the state. James was enthusiastic in his desire of possessing a naval force, being aware, no doubt, that it was the chief means by which he could hope to influence distant nations. Finding the ancient woods in his own country extirpated—those woods whose universality at one time gave the country its name—he was at great expense to procure timber from France; and he had a ship-building establishment at the village of

Newhaven, near Leith, where he is said to have spent the most part of his forenoons, when not engaged in progresses or pilgrimages through the country. The large vessel above-mentioned was reared here : it was called the Great Michael, and is said to have cost him thirty thousand pounds. He also paid great attention to the founding of artillery, casting many large pieces at an establishment for that purpose in Edinburgh Castle, where it is recorded that he entertained a very expert artist of the name of Borthwick, who inscribed his productions with the following hexameter line :

“ Machina sum Scoto Borthwic fabricata Roberto.”

Lyndsay, the gossiping annalist of these times, mentions seven fair pieces which proceeded from the Edinburgh Castle foundry, called “ The Seven Sisters.” It is also believed, with much probability, that the enormous gun called Mons Meg, which still exists in Edinburgh Castle, to the astonishment of modern generations, was a production of the magnificent taste of King James the Fourth, whose personal interest in the proceedings here, as well as at Newhaven, is proved by the circumstance, mentioned in a letter of the period, that he was one day nearly killed, from the bursting of a gun which was in the process of being tested, after issuing from the foundry.* Upon

* The guns of this period were formed of long slips of iron, girded together with close iron rings, after the fashion of a barrel. No iron or lead shot was used—nothing but round stones. The capacity of a certain gun belonging to King James, is described by a contemporary writer in the awkward and most humiliating phrase, “ that it shot stones as large as penny loaves.”

the whole, it is evident that James had great resources, and also a disposition to use them for great ends. He seems to have been a kind of Peter the Great, upon a scale proportioned to the materials he had to work with, and the condition of the countries around him.

Unfortunately, this period of opulence and vigorous government was but of short duration, and darker night was destined soon to settle down upon the affairs of Scotland. Henry VII. James's pacific father-in-law, died in 1509, and was succeeded by his son Henry VIII. a spirit still more characterized by the fieryness and extravagance of youth than the Scottish king. It was scarcely possible that two sovereigns, each of so violent a temperament, could co-exist in the same island without coming into collision, and striking out the fire of war. Accordingly, it is observable that causes of quarrel quickly arose. Some years before, a Portuguese vessel had committed piracy upon one belonging to a Scottish naval adventurer of the name of Barton. James, after repeatedly endeavouring to procure redress by negotiation, gave a letter of marque, or commission of reprisal, to the aggrieved person, who immediately proceeded to commit such havoc among the Portuguese traders, as alarmed even that country, then in all the pride of its discovery of the Cape of Good Hope and the East Indies, and decidedly the principal naval power in the world. Nor did Barton confine himself to Portuguese vessels, but he also attacked English ones voyaging to and from that country. At this the English mo-

narch conceived high offence, and fitting out an expedition soon overthrew and captured the whole force of the Scottish privateer. James, in his turn, regarded this as an insult to his flag, and demanded reparation, when all the answer he got from King Henry was, that kings never thought of quarrelling about pirates. Among other causes of offence, were—the unredressed murder of one of the Scottish wardens by a set of English moss-troopers, and the unwarrantable detention by King Henry of a legacy left to the Scottish queen by her father. When James remonstrated on this latter point, Henry was so mean as to offer a compensation in money, under the condition that King James should not enter into a league with France against him. James answered, with becoming spirit, that if his wife really required to have her father's legacy, or any sum of money instead of it, he could give her that money himself: and he was, of course, just the more disposed to adhere to France, that Henry took such a base expedient to alienate him from it.

France and England were now on the point of falling into one of those absurd and unnecessary wars so common in the early ages of their history, and for which so little cause, over and above situation, is observable to a modern inquirer. Henry, rioting over the full coffers left by his parsimonious father, seems to have thought it necessary to have a war with France to grace the beginning of his reign, just as a modern gentleman, who attains fortune and majority at once, is apt to conceive it right and fitting that he

should sport a few thousands on the turf or in the gambling-house, and run the risk of a broken neck in leaping certain fences and quagmires. James was not at this time bound in such close or recent league to France as to England; and, to do him justice, he seems to have desired peace with the latter country, till his spirit could no longer brook the indignities offered to him by King Henry. When at length mutual offence had taken deep root, James received a message from the French Queen, couched in terms that appealed very powerfully to his chivalrous temperament. Assuming the tone of a distressed damsel of romance, this princess—an artful and beautiful one—requested that the Scottish King would march but three steps into England for her sake; and she sent a ring as the pledge of her friendship. This was enough to overpower James's *heart*; his *mind* was gradually brought over to the same views by a present of fourteen thousand crowns from the French court, together with a great supply of what he loved best, arms, artillery, and ammunition; and by seeing several small squadrons of English vessels brought triumphantly into Leith by French men-of-war and his own privateers. Thus influenced, it was impossible that James could abstain from throwing himself into the war, as an enemy of England.

In the summer of 1513, Henry led a gallant army into France, and laid siege to Terouenne, whither James sent his Lion king-at-arms to utter a last and formal remonstrance against his proceedings, and to threaten a descent upon England in the event of his not giving

up the war. Henry listened to the threats of his brother of Scotland with contempt, and sent back an answer full of the most violent expressions of contumely and defiance. But before this came back, James had fitted out an immense naval armament to proceed to France, and had gathered the whole military force of his country at Edinburgh, in order to make that diversion upon the north of England which the French Queen had suggested. This host was the most numerous and the best appointed that had ever been collected in Scotland ; it amounted to one hundred thousand fighting men, and it was accompanied by an excellent train of artillery. Its only weakness lay in the mood of the soldiery, who, being unable to understand the object of the war, or distrusting the King's prudence in entering into it, felt none of that enthusiasm which is so necessary to secure victory to an army composed of national militia.

There were others to feel in this way besides the mere soldiery. James's consort, Margaret, could not behold him breaking the wand of peace with her brother without the most painful feelings. Nor were the nobles less distressed to find themselves dragged into a contest which promised so little advantage to the nation. Various expedients were tried to divert him from his purpose. As he was performing his devotions, one afternoon, in the church of Linlithgow, a tall, old man, in eastern attire, intended to represent the Apostle John, pressed through the crowd of courtiers which filled the church, and addressed him in something like the following words :—" Sir King,

my mother hath sent me to you, desiring you not to pass at this time where thou art purposed ; for, if thou dost, thou shalt not fare well in thy journey, nor none that passeth with thee ;" after which, the strange intruder vanished amidst the crowd, and could no more be seen. About the same time, a visionary troop of heralds appeared at midnight upon the market cross of Edinburgh, where proclamations usually took place, and summoned a long list of persons holding command in the army, to appear in the court of Pluto within forty days. This last omen was witnessed by a gentleman named Lawson, Provost of Edinburgh, who happened to be walking in his balcony opposite the Cross on account of indisposition, and who, hearing his own name mentioned, cast a crown-piece into the street, taking protest against "that infernal judicatory," as he called it, and committing himself to the mercy of God. The superstitious historian who records the incident, avers that Lawson was, consequently, the only person out of the list who did not fall at Flodden. But in spite of all warnings and all intreaties, in spite of wisdom itself, James persisted in carrying his purpose into effect.

Towards the end of August he led his enormous army to the Border, and, entering England at Twizel, successively took the castles of Notham, Etal, and Ford. The state of England at this time was such, that if he had chosen, he might have easily overrun the greater part of it, and committed the most dreadful devastations. His whole object, however, being to produce a diversion in favour of France, he contented

himself with doing little more than what was necessary to fulfil the behest of the queen. of that country ; not penetrating above six miles beyond the frontier. The old historians assign, as a cause for this, that he fell into the toils of an intriguing woman, the lady of the last-mentioned castle, who undertook to detain him where he was, till an English army should be mustered against him. But, though James might perhaps be imprudent enough to dally a little with some such lady, it does not seem probable that the pause he made upon the border was any thing else than what he proposed to himself in entering upon the expedition. Perhaps he waited for the answer which the Lord Lion was to bring back to him from Henry, before proceeding to ravage the country. Settling down in the early days of September, upon a swelling upland or hill called Flodden, which overlooks the course of the river Till, and commands a prospect of the whole of the south of Scotland on that side of Lammermuir, James waited patiently till the 9th, when it was at length announced to him that the Earl of Surrey was within a few miles of his camp, leading a considerable army, which he had hastily gathered in the northern counties. Before this period, by far the greater part of the common soldiery of the Scottish army had gone home to attend to their harvest, and there now only remained with King James about thirty thousand, consisting chiefly of borderers, and comprising almost all the persons of good birth who had originally joined his standard. With those remaining *adherents*, who were all counsellors, he had had many

disputes regarding the propriety of his conduct ; but, nevertheless, from a sentiment of honour, all except one or two, whom the King had insulted with bitter language, continued faithfully attached to him. It was upon this diminished army that the Earl of Surrey, who had been appointed to defend England in the absence of the King in France, marched with one nearly equal in numbers, but by no means composed of such a select body of men.

When the Scottish lords were informed of the approach of Surrey, they held a council, at which Patrick Lord Lindsay, an ancient and sagacious peer, acted as president. Into this assembly James is said to have intruded himself in disguise. Lord Lindsay addressed the Lords in a long speech, in which he likened their present circumstances to a game. "You are like a silly merchant," said he, "who has but one gold rose noble, and yet stakes it against a crooked halfpenny. The King is that rose-noble, and him you would risk in opposition to an old man in a chariot,* and an army of peasants and artizans." From the eloquence of this allegorist, the lords resolved that the King should be kept aside in safety, while they did what was in their power against the enemy. At this, however, the King abruptly disclosed himself, and, starting up in a passion, swore that he would that day fight against England, though all of them had sworn the contrary. "I see how it is," said he, "you would all fly from me and shame yourselves ; but, shame whom you like,

* The Earl of Surrey..

you shall not shame me. As for Lindsay," he continued, "I vow to God I shall not see Scotland sooner than I shall cause him to hang on his own gate." And such was the fear inspired by this appearance of offended majesty, that the nobles gave up their resolution, and consented to act precisely as the King should dictate.

James's conduct after this was of the same unreasonable description. He resolved to avail himself of no advantages over the enemy which fortune might put into his power. Hence, when Surrey wheeled along the opposite bank of the Till, exposed in flank to the Scottish army, James would not permit an attack to be made upon him in that defenceless quarter, though it promised to decide the day in his favour. Hence, also, when the English army reached the bridge over the Till, and began to cross, James scornfully rejected the proposal of his chief gunner to have a few pieces directed to it, though it might have been easy, by that means, to break up the host of the enemy. A fair field was the object of the Scottish King, and to take any expedient for preventing a regular stricken battle would have appeared to him as cowardice. It did not occur to his head-strong mind, that there were other interests to be consulted besides his own; and that he had no right, for the gratification of his own extravagant sentiments, to risk the lives of so many of his people, and the good of his country.

The battle which ensued may be best described in the words of the old Scottish historian, Lindsay of Pitscottie. "By this the watches came, and shewed

the King the English army was at hand, marching fast forward, within the space of a Scottish mile. Then the King caused blow the trumpets, and set his men in order of battle; to wit, he gave the rear-guard to the Earl of Huntly and to the Lord Hume, who were in number ten thousand men; and took the great battle* unto himself, with all the nobility of Scotland, which passed not above twenty thousand men, and marched forward a little in sight of the Englishmen, which were passing over the bridge to them.

“The Englishmen were come all over the bridge, and the van-guards were marching near together, to wit, the Scottish van-guard, the Earl of Huntly, the Lord Hume with the borderers, who joined cruelly on every side, and fought cruelly, with uncertain victory. But at last the Earl of Huntly’s Highlandmen, with their bows and two-handed swords, wrought so manfully, that they defeat the Englishmen, without any slaughter on their side. Then the Earl of Huntly and Lord Hume blew their trumpets, and convened their men again into their standards.

“By this the two great battles of England came forward upon the King’s battle, and joined awfully at the sound of the trumpet, and fought furiously a long time; but, at last, the King of Scotland defeated them both. Then the great battle of England, led by the Lord Howard, who was under his father, the Earl of Surrey, governor of that battle, came furiously upon the King, to the number of twenty thousand

* Battalion.

fresh men. But the King's battle encountered them hardily, and fought manfully on both the sides, with uncertain victory, till that the streams of blood ran on either side so abundantly, that all the fields and waters were made red with the confluence thereof. The Earl of Huntly and Lord Hume then standing in arrayed battle, who had won the van-guard before, and few of their men either hurt or slain; the Earl of Huntly desired at the Lord Hume that he would help the King, and rescue him in his extremity; for he said, that he was overset with the multitude of men. Notwithstanding, the Lord Hume answered the Earl of Huntly in this manner, saying, 'He does well that does for himself; we have fought and won our part of the battle, let the rest fight what remains as well.' The Earl of Huntly answered, 'He could not suffer his native Prince to be overcome with his enemies before his eyes;' and, raising his slogan (war-cry), rushed with his men towards the King. But, ere he came, all was defeat on either side, that few or none were living, either on the King's side or on the other."

The battle described in these picturesque terms, took place on the gentle descent of the Flodden Hill; for, as soon as the English army appeared ascending the heights, the Scottish soldiers were commanded by their King to set fire to their shingle camp, and, under cover of the smoke, descend to meet the enemy. The fight began at four o'clock in the afternoon, and was only terminated by night. During the three or four hours it lasted, the two armies shifted

ground a good deal to the westward, not by the retreat of either party, but merely, it would appear, like two eager combatants on the stage, from the intensity of the struggle. James fought the whole time in the midst of a generous and devoted nobility, till he fell by the wound of an arrow, which pierced his brain. His death was not known till next morning; nor was the fate of the day ascertained any sooner. The remains of both armies continued on the field all night, and it was only on finding their King to be slain, that the Scots perceived themselves to be the losers. They immediately drew off, leaving their splendid train of artillery to the English, though a small party might have easily secured it. They also left upon this fatal field, in addition to their sovereign, twelve earls, thirteen lords, upwards of fifty chiefs and men of note, and about ten thousand common men. The army of Surrey had also suffered considerably; but there was a mighty difference in the general rank of the slain.

CHAPTER VII.

MINORITY OF JAMES V.

THE disaster of Flodden, by which, as at Gilboa, king and people were thus stretched lifeless together, which had cropped, as it were, the very flower of the nation, produced extreme alarm and grief, as soon as it was known in Scotland. Scarcely a noble family in the country, or a municipal community, but what had lost either its valued head, or some important adjunct, not a hamlet but what had to cry the coronach over some humble denizen. These were circumstances calculated to make the land, from one end to another, but one house of mourning, and impress such a sense of woe upon the people, as might scarcely ever be erased. We are seriously told by the historian Spottiswood, as an instance of the grief felt on this occasion, that Bishop Elphinstone, of Aberdeen, was never seen to smile during the two remaining years which he lived, although it is not mentioned that he had any private reason for lament: such was simply the effect of the incident upon a benevolent and patriotic mind. It may also be mentioned, that in the lawn before Cassillis Castle, in Ayrshire, an ancient plane is still called by the expressive name of

he *dule tree*, or tree of grief, because the remainder of the tenants of that estate sat under its gloomy boughs, during the whole winter after the battle, lamenting the loss which they, in common with the whole country, had experienced on that disastrous day. Every where it was acknowledged that, amidst all the calamities which had befallen Scotland in the course of several ages, none was nearly so severe as this, by which maiden was bereaved of her lover, and wife of her husband, and the bloom, and glory, and strength of the nation, at once "*wede away*."

The first policy of England, after its victory, seems to have been inspired by a feeling of pity for the gallant little nation, which had already experienced a punishment so much superior to its offence. The Earl of Surrey, certain that he had fairly checked the spirit of aggression in Scotland, and judging, perhaps, that his sovereign would not wish to annoy a country which now fell under the government of his sister, disbanded the army. A different policy, however, was soon to be substituted for this; and, amidst the cloud of grief which overspread the country, Lord Dacre burst in upon it with an army of borderers, who swept the southern counties, burnt many houses and towns, and carried off immense spoil. This cruel act places the character of King Henry in one of its worst points of view.

The government of Scotland had fallen, by the death of James IV. under the name of his infant child, who now became king by the title of James V. The late sovereign, before marching upon his unfortunate ex-

pedition, had had the prudence to place eighteen thousand crowns of spare treasure secretly in the hands of his consort, whom by his will he had appointed to be tutrix of his child and regent of the kingdom. Margaret was therefore able, even amidst the tears and groans of her afflicted subjects, and with a frontier harassed by the enemy, to assume the government with a firm hand. Nor did the mild and rather elevated character of this princess at first promise an unhappy government.

Unfortunately, there was one fatal weakness in the Queen, which, as in the previous case of Mary of Guelderland, was destined to blight this promise to her son and her country. She had scarcely recovered from the delivery of a child, born six months after her husband's death, ere she was prevailed upon, by this unfortunate weakness of temperament, to make a new match with the Earl of Angus, a nobleman younger than herself, and whose only recommendation was a handsome person. This lost her the respect of the people, and the submission of the nobles, none of whom could stoop to a sceptre which was in reality wielded by an equal. Under such circumstances, the majority of the nation cast their eyes upon John Duke of Albany as an eligible person to become Regent in her stead. This person was son of Alexander Duke of Albany, the rebellious brother of James III., and had been born and educated in France. He was turned thirty years of age, and was as yet known for no bad qualities, though it afterwards appeared that he wanted

almost every substantial requisite for the situation to which it was proposed that he should be exalted.

Before Albany was called over, Scotland had fallen into a state of anarchy almost unprecedented, every man pursuing his own ends without the least regard to his neighbours or the laws, while innumerable private crimes and depredations were passed over by a feeble executive without punishment. Amidst this wildering scene, we find Henry intriguing to get possession of the young king and his brother, and gloating with delight over every successive disturbance which seemed to bring Scotland a little nearer to a resignation of its political existence into his hands. His faithful warden Dacre, informing him in a dispatch of the very turbulent and distracted state of the country, adds, with that unconscious malevolence which a man may entertain regarding a country different from his own, "which pray God continue!" What added greatly to disturbances that little needed such inflammation, the most violent disputes at this time prevailed regarding church benefices. It was to a country so torn by domestic contention, that Albany came, in May 1515, with his smooth, easy, voluptuous character, and French refinement of manners; a nosegay thrown upon a raging sea, in the vain hope of charming it to a calm.

Just before the arrival of the new Regent, Scotland was included in a pacification which France thought proper to ratify with England; and hence it could not be said that he had any foreign war to disturb him in the commencement of his government. For some

time, even the rude elements of Scottish faction seemed disposed to settle down beneath his hand : the Queen was obliged by the estates to give up her children to his keeping ; and she and Angus, with several other persons who had opposed his admission, were reduced to the necessity of quitting the kingdom. That very principle which had dictated his selection for the regency—namely, the attachment of the people to the blood-royal—ought to have gone a great way, if his other qualifications had been at all tolerable, to make him a powerful and successful ruler. Nothing, however, will compensate in royalty, more particularly still in its deputy, for personal defects. Half coward half fool, as Cardinal Wolsey described him, Albany was as opiniative as if he had been the perfection of political sagacity. Unacquainted with the people and their temper, he was as fearless in his domestic policy as if he had known the country from infancy. Even in familiar intercourse with his friends, this man could not endure to have his lightest word contradicted. His invariable conduct, when provoked on that account, was to start into a rage and throw his bonnet into the fire—in which mode of argument, says the sarcastic Pinkerton, he had consumed at least a dozen of those missive syllogisms. Among his first acts was the seizure and execution of Lord Hume, one of the most powerful and extensively connected noblemen in the kingdom, whose only apparent fault was his having succeeded to much of the land and the territorial influence of Albany's father in the south-east district of Scotland. Another was to throw the venerable Lord

Drummond into prison, for the professed crime of having struck a herald on the breast a twelvemonth before, when that officer brought him a message from the estates regarding Albany—though the more obvious fault was his being maternal grandfather to Angus, the Queen's husband, and a chief rival of the Albany interest. While proceedings of this nature excited the displeasure of many persons of consequence, the populace in general conceived the utmost contempt for their new governor, from his making open profession to govern Scotland for "his master, the King of France," (he was in reality a vassal of that sovereign), and even from such minute causes of offence as his signing his name in French, and making use of none but French servants.* It was soon seen, that, in choosing Albany from his being the nearest adult kinsman to the King,† and without inquiring into his character, a grievous error had been committed; and, while the Scots were repenting and mourning over

* I am afraid the Duke must have been justifiable in the eye of taste for at least this fault.

† It may be worth while to remark, as an illustration of the celebrated Regency question of 1789, that the Scots at least seem to have always had the idea advocated on that occasion for party reasons by Fox, that the nearest adult relative was entitled to assume the Regency. Perhaps the custom which formerly obtained among them, of placing that individual on the throne, to the exclusion of an infant heir, became modified into this notion. But, whatever force they might give to such a principle in theory, it is evident that it was often broken through in practice. There is a want of certainty on this subject in the British constitution, which ought to be corrected at the earliest leisure of the nation.

their unfortunate choice, it gave, of course, unalloyed pleasure to England. "If Albany be such a man," says the Earl of Surrey in a letter to Wolsey, "*by the grace of God, we shall speed the better.*" The grand object of England at this time was to make Scotland disgusted with a separate government, and induce it to become an English province. For this purpose, Surrey and Dacre were constantly residing on the borders, in communication with a party they maintained in the Scottish court.

A state of things like this could not continue long. Before Albany had been a year in Scotland, he felt his situation so disagreeable as to express a wish that he had broken his legs and arms that day he first set sail for this wretched country. Then, requesting permission from the Estates to pay a short visit to France, and making a paction with the banished Queen Margaret to govern in his absence, he set sail for that luxurious country, which was in every respect so much better suited to his faculties, and which he was not again to quit for five years. Margaret, who, during her absence in England, had given birth to a child, styled Lady Margaret Douglas, then resumed the management of affairs, with a council of nobles to direct her proceedings.

In thus abandoning Scotland, it does not appear that Albany resigned all claim over the direction of its affairs. He left a kind of deputy, or pro-regent, to take charge of his interests, and maintain a party in his favour. This was the Sieur Anthony de la Bastie, a French knight, who had figured in the chivalrous

pectacles of James IV., and enjoyed the fame of being an excellent soldier. That he was also attentive to the interests of the country in his present situation, is proved by the pains he took on all occasions to preserve peace, and facilitate the execution of justice. Unfortunately these were dispositions that could scarcely be exercised in Scotland without considerable risk.

In his capacity of Warden of the East Marches, De la Bastie found it necessary, in September 1517, to march to Langton, near Dunse, in order to break up a siege which David Hume, of Wedderburn, was carrying on against that castle, in prosecution of a feud with the proprietor. Accompanied by a guard of three hundred men, the gallant Frenchman approached Langton Castle, and boldly called upon the besiegers to desist. He was only answered by an insolent allusion to his country, which the force of the border chief enabled him to make with perfect security; when De la Bastie thought proper to retire, though not without telling Hume that he should be made to answer for this insult in another place. Hume then becoming somewhat alarmed, rode after De la Bastie, with the intention of saying something to appease him, or at least of offering an explanation of his conduct wherever a charge might be made. As he proceeded, great numbers of the country people flocked in arms to assist him, conceiving that he designed to slay the fugitive, who, as one of Albany's men, was much hated. Just as the band of Hume increased, that of De la Bastie, from fear and treachery,

melted away ; and the laird of Wedderburn then changed his intentions. Remembering the fate of his kinsman Lord Hume, which the feelings of that age made it a duty that he should revenge, conceiving, also, that if De la Bastie got safe to the capital, he might cause the ruin of the house of Wedderburn, he resolved to take advantage of the opportunity, and rid the country of its French ruler. De la Bastie, now seeing himself nearly deserted, made all the haste he could towards the castle of Dunbar, where he knew there was a strong French garrison. He rode through the town of Dunse with the speed of a man who rides through the camp of an enemy. Close behind him came the vengeful Wedderburn, followed by two or three of his nearest kindred, who were equally animated with himself against the fugitive, while a great band of the adherents of the family came up behind. The ill-starred Frenchman reached a spot two miles east of Dunse without being overtaken. Here, unfortunately, his horse stumbled upon a stony part of the road, and precipitated him into an adjacent morass. He rose, heard the cry of the enemy behind him, and, in desperation, endeavoured to make his way across the quagmire on foot, although he must well have known that Dunbar castle was twenty miles away, and that he must be overtaken before he had proceeded as many yards. He had in reality proceeded little more than that short distance, when David Hume came up and slew him ; after which, cutting off the head of his victim, the cruel borderer fixed it by its long plaited hair to the pom-

iel of his saddle, and rode triumphantly back to Dunse, where he placed the bloody emblem on the point of a spear. He thence carried it to Hume Castle, the seat of the nobleman beheaded by Albany, and erecting it on the battlements, left it as a sacrifice to the manes of that unfortunate peer, whose head had been placed ignominiously on the Tolbooth of Edinburgh. This remarkable anecdote of the times is chiefly taken from a manuscript history of the house of Wedderburn, which was written less than a century after the event, by a cadet of the family, and in which, notwithstanding this horrid transaction, David Hume is described as a man generally worthy, and distinguished by many virtues. As one assassination was in that age always sure to lead to others, we find that James Hepburn, of Hailes, some years after, when Albany was again in Scotland, slew David Hume, prior of Coldingham, by way of doing a pleasure to the Regent, whose indignation, it must be remarked, was roused to a high pitch by the murder of his deputy. The murder of Hume was, in its turn, revenged by the laird of Wedderburn slaying Blackater, the succeeding prior of Coldingham, who was an ally of Hepburn. After which the feud seems to have been stanchd, that is, accommodated; or else a more vigorous government must have prevented its being carried any further:

For two or three years after the murder of De la Bastie, few incidents of note occur; the country remained under the nominal rule of Queen Margaret, but in reality divided between the two factions of

Angus her husband, and Arran, the representative of the house of Hamilton.* Many bickerings took place between these parties, and so completely was the power of the state divided between them, that no man could prosper in any public business, nor even get fair play in a court of law, unless he professed either to be a "Douglas's man," that is, an adherent of the Earl of Angus, or a "Hamilton's man," which meant an *attaché* of the Earl of Arran. Precisely in proportion to the share of power enjoyed by one or other of these noblemen, did their respective adherents remain free of oppression, or flourish in their worldly affairs. On the other hand, the most violent breaches of the peace might have been committed without question, under the sanction of either of these names, provided only that no offence was committed against the interests of the opposite faction. Arran's power prevailed chiefly in the west of Scotland, where it was much enforced by the influence of James Betoun, Archbishop of Glasgow, his brother-in-law and firm ally. That of Angus was principally dominant in Edinburgh and the southern and eastern provinces.

An attempt was made in May, 1520, to accommodate the differences of these nobles in parliament. Preparatory to the meeting of that solemn council, Angus, to give assurance of his good faith, caused a kinsman of his to be divested of the office of Provost of Edinburgh; and, what was certainly an immense stretch of liberality, discharged all his ordinary at-

* Grandson of King James II. by a daughter.

endants except about four hundred. As Edinburgh was little better than an enemy's country to Arran, he could not be expected to make such a show of good dispositions: he came attended by a large body of adherents, including the intriguing churchman Be-toun, who, for the occasion, had prepared himself with armour and arms, worn beneath his pontifical robes. Perhaps, to make this more intelligible, it may be necessary to inform the reader, that a muster of armed force was a natural accompaniment of all parliaments which took place in Scotland during turbulent times, and even of most of the justiciary trials. At such a time, for instance, as the present, when single noblemen successively usurped the power of the state, it was only by bringing forward an immense force that they could support their respective parties in the national council. Without that, no attention was to be expected to their respective claims within the house of assembly; without that, right was disregarded, and justice unheard. But in general there was only one party present in a Scottish parliament—that which had the greatest influence for the time; the minority, in fact, being unable to show face, from the mere dread of being overpowered in battle by the prevailing faction.

The superior force of Arran naturally gave the friends of Angus some alarm; and that nobleman thought it adviseable to send his uncle, Bishop Gavin Douglas,* to enter a remonstrance upon the subject

* Bishop of Dunkeld, and distinguished for his poetical talents.

with the Archbishop of Glasgow. Douglas found Betoun in the Blackfriars' Monastery, and made no scruple, in the course of conversation, to mention the popular report that he was at the bottom of all these hostile manifestations on the part of the Hamiltons. "Indeed," cried Betoun; "upon my conscience, my Lord, I knew nothing of the matter." As he spoke he struck his hand emphatically upon his breast, and caused the armour under his gown to utter a sound grievously at issue with his words. "My Lord," answered Douglas, with pointed sarcasm, "methinks your conscience is none of the soundest; if I am not much mistaken, I heard it clattering." To this Betoun could only make a confused reply; and Douglas, then seeing it to be vain to seek peace in this quarter, left the monastery.

The amiable Bishop now applied, on the same account, to Sir Patrick Hamilton, brother to the Earl of Arran, a knight no less famed in Scottish history for chivalrous behaviour in the spectacles of King James IV. than he was universally respected by his contemporaries for his prudent and moderate character. Immediately entering into Douglas's views, Sir Patrick proceeded to argue with his noble brother regarding the propriety of assuming a peaceable demeanour. But all was spoilt by the interference of Sir James Hamilton, an illegitimate son of Arran, who, hearing Sir Patrick speak in favour of peace, and being himself bent on war, petulantly accused the good knight of being backward in fighting for the interests of the family; which affected Sir Patrick's

temper to such a degree, that he also gave way to the general desire of fighting, and even expressed a more headlong wish than the rest to proceed to battle.

Angus had in the mean time taken the precaution to post his small force upon the principal street of the city, and to barricade all the lanes leading into it, while the citizens, all of whom in that warlike age kept arms in their houses, handed spears to his men from the windows, and thereby armed them in a superior manner to the Hamiltons, who had only their swords. As the latter defiled slowly and in detached parties from the lanes, the Douglasses every where met them at an advantage. One considerable party, at the head of which was Sir Patrick Hamilton and the Earl of Arran, came forward to the spot where Angus himself was posted; and there a sharp conflict took place. Sir Patrick, rushing far a-head of his retinue, was the first man to fall. He perished by a bullet, to the great regret of the Earl of Angus, who anxiously wished to save him. Just at that crisis, David Hume, of Wedderburn, arrived with a band of borderers to the assistance of his friend Angus; and the contest immediately became unequal. The Hamiltons were in a few minutes obliged to retire through the lanes opposite to those from which they had just emerged, after having lost seventy men. The Earl of Arran and his son mounted a coal-horse, from which they threw off the load, and with difficulty escaped by fording the lake to the north of the city. Their co-adjutor Betoun took refuge in the Blackfriars' Monastery, from whence he would have in-

evitably been dragged and slain, but for the interference of the Bishop of Dunkeld, who, with the fellow-feeling of a churchman, said it would shame their victory if they were to stain it with the blood of a consecrated prelate. This strange skirmish, which left Angus triumphant in the seat of government, was popularly styled *clean-the-causey*, from the Douglasses having, as if by a sudden and magical act of scavengership, completely *swept* their enemies off the street; a curious trait, it must be acknowledged, of the humour of the time.

From this period till December 1521, the supreme power may be said to have vested in the hands of Angus, though his wife, from whom he had been long estranged, continued as nominal chief of the council. Henry VIII. being now engaged with Spain in an extensive scheme of warfare against France and the Pope, the King of the last-mentioned country thought proper to remand his creature Albany into Scotland, with an ample provision of arms and money, to attempt a diversion upon the north of England. For some time success seemed likely to attend this enterprise. Albany, landing in the west of Scotland, where the suppressed party of Hamiltons chiefly resided, immediately found himself surrounded by a considerable force. Advancing with this to Edinburgh, he caused the existing government of the Douglasses at once to give way, and easily succeeded in re-investing himself with the full authority of Regent. Angus took refuge in England, and Margaret quietly withdrew to one of her private residences. So strong

influence did French gold now exercise in this poor country, that in a very few months the Duke was able to lead an army of eighty thousand men to the border, the best appointed, if not also the most numerous force, ever taken thither by a Scottish prince. There can be no doubt that, if he had entered England in a spirited manner, he might have easily overrun all the northern provinces, and achieved the object of his mission by causing the English army to be withdrawn from France. But Albany was too pusillanimous to venture upon any such decisive measure. Dacre, the English warden, though said to have been utterly destitute of an army, was able, by mere boasting and threatening, and a judicious concealment of his weakness, to draw the silly Regent into an armistice, in the terms of which he agreed to dissolve his magnificent host, and give up the whole enterprise. Never, perhaps, was the power of a large army so completely baulked and neutralised by the mere cowardice of a general. The result was, that he became an object of contempt in the country, and was speedily obliged to take refuge once more in France. In his absence, the Earl of Surrey collected a small army, and ravaged the Scottish frontiers, as a revenge for his abortive attempt upon England. He returned next year, with new supplies of money, and four or five thousand French soldiers, and again gathering a Scotch army, proceeded to besiege the castle of Wark, upon the borders of Northumberland. But this expedition was destined to end as ingloriously as the first. At a very slight and false alarm, the Regent

took to flight, with all his men ; and there was but one day between his being at the head of sixty thousand men, and his taking refuge in Edinburgh almost without a guard. French gold could now no longer protect this wretched prince from the contempt of Scotland ; he soon after left the country, never to return.

After this third retirement of Albany, the Queen Regent quietly resumed her authority, and the Earl of Angus returned from England once more, to give her the protection of his numerous vassalage, which might be said to form her standing army. Her son was now a boy of twelve years of age, and already had given token of excellent abilities. He was a good horseman and runner at the glove, a graceful dancer, and a pleasing singer, besides possessing much masculine sense and information, for which he was mainly indebted to his worthy preceptor, Gavin Dunbar, Bishop of Aberdeen. All the habits and tastes of this young prince were of a manly nature. An English envoy, writing to Cardinal Wolsey at this time, while he mentions that James would like to be presented with an ornamented buckler, similar to that which he understood to be used by his uncle the King of England, says, that it must be no toy, but of the full size, as the King was too much of a man to endure any thing that seemed calculated for a child. " Already," says this writer, " he wears a sword a yard long in the blade, and yet he can draw it as well as any man." Nor was he deficient in the address and force of character *which were required to fit him for his high destiny.*

Already he could look down and frown, nay, even use hard words, to such of the courtiers as his mother expressed herself displeased with. It is related, as an instance of his quickness of wit, that, being asked what should be done with some of Albany's French guards, who remained in the country, he archly replied, in allusion to the fate of De la Bastie, "Give them to Davie Hume's keeping."

It was now projected at the English court, that an attempt should be made to supplant the French interest in Scotland, by enabling the young King to assume the reins of government into his own hands. For this purpose much chicanery was exerted, and much money spent; even the Scotch King's guards were supported for a time by a certain daily pay from England. Margaret, whose facility of character no change of government could disturb, readily lent herself to this scheme, and it was soon completed by the return of the Earl of Angus from France, whither he had gone, after being expelled from Scotland by Albany. Perhaps the reader will be surprised at the rapidity with which such changes were made in Scotland; but he must take into account that, just as the parliament was obliged to vote with that peer who had the best means of supporting it, so was the country at large forced by its smallness, as compared with England and France, to attach itself for protection to the skirts of one or other of those powers.

In the mean time, Margaret lost what remained of her respectability and influence, by a marriage which (having previously procured a divorce from Angus),

she contracted with Henry Stuart, a second son of Lord Evandale. No obstacle, therefore, remained to prevent the chief of the house of Douglas, whose character was improved by his travels, and who had made a close compact with the English monarch, from assuming the protection of the young King ; in other words, the regency of the kingdom. James's manly spirit writhed beneath this domination, which was accompanied by a severe restraint upon his person ; but the territorial power of the Earl, enforced by the countenance of England, was too great to admit of dispute. Even Arran, and other former rivals of the name of Douglas, now submitted to its overpowering influence. Only two attempts were made by different great land proprietors to resist it ; one by Scott of Buccleuch, and another by the Earl of Lennox ; but two successive victories at Melrose and Linlithgow-bridge—in the last of which Lennox was slain by the fierce Sir James Hamilton, after having received quarter—served only to consolidate the power of Douglas. In the country, there was now only one way to prosperity, one means of safety—that of professing to be an adherent of this overgrown noble.

There was, however, a proverbial insecurity in all power exerted in Scotland. The lapse of two or three years was sufficient to reanimate old, and to excite new enmities against the Douglasses. On the King, therefore, contriving to make his escape from their keeping, and raising his own standard against them—*which* took place in July 1528—he appears to have

found no great difficulty in gathering a band of adherents sufficient to resist their power, and procure their forfeiture in Parliament. One of the traits of James's character was a disposition to cherish deep and lasting resentments. Unable to forgive the Douglasses for the restraint in which they had held him, he was never content till he had expelled them from the kingdom, and procured their utter ruin. Under these circumstances, Angus and the chief of his kindred naturally took refuge at the English Court, with which they had previously been in strict alliance; and James never permitted one of them to return to the country so long as he reigned.

CHAPTER VIII.

JAMES V. CONCLUDED.

ONE of the King's first proceedings, after gaining his independence, was to redress some of the evils which had sprung up in the course of his long minority. Turning his eyes towards the Border, where neither law nor government, and scarcely even country, had been acknowledged for many years, he assembled a light-armed force of about ten thousand men, on the pretence of a grand hunting-match, and, setting out in that direction, came successively upon Cockburn of Henderland, and Scott of Tushilaw, two noted freebooters, who, as they only expected to see him pass to the chase—and here we have a remarkable trait of the age—had taken no precautions for their safety. These two individuals, the latter of whom was so formidable as to have acquired the name of King of the Borders, he hanged without ceremony over their own gates. Then proceeding through the wild passes which lead towards Eskdale, he was met at Carlenrig, ten miles south of Hawick, by the most magnificent of all these banditti—the famed Johnnie Armstrong—who, quite ignorant of the fate of his companions, had *come* in the most splendid array, with six-and-thirty

gallant attendants, to welcome the King to the country, and join in his sport. James received this robber with an ominous frown, and, turning to his courtiers, asked sneeringly what he wanted to make him equal in appearance to a king; after which he condemned the whole band to immediate execution. When Armstrong perceived what was to be his fate, he made every attempt which ingenuity could devise to procure a reversal of his sentence, represented of what effect he might be in protecting the borders for King James's interest, and offered to maintain a large body of men constantly for that purpose. But the young monarch was quite inexorable. Seeing this at last, the robber drew himself up with pride, and, remarking with bitter sarcasm that it was needless to seek grace of a graceless face, submitted himself to his fate. The whole of these thirty-seven "pretty men" were hanged upon living trees by the way-side except one, who, bursting from his guard, ran to Armstrong's tower upon Esk side, and communicated the fatal intelligence to his lady love. By such terrible examples, James is said to have accomplished what he stated in the outset to be his wish; he enabled men to keep cattle on the Borders without a guard, the same as in the more civilized parts of Scotland. This was an object worthy of a young king, who attained to power under such circumstances; and it serves to show the strength of his character, that, at the premature age of eighteen, he should have carried through his purpose with such decision and success.

James's general aspect at the commencement of his

actual reign is that of a reformer. Well educated himself, and gifted above the common order of men, he could well perceive both the evils under which his country laboured, and the expedients which were most likely to work their cure. Having taken care in the first place to strengthen his own hands, he proceeded to correct many of the oppressive systems which, during the anarchy of the last age, his nobles had established over the community. One grand effort was to take the administration of justice from a standing committee of parliament, which had previously been the only court of law, and place it in the hands of a regular bench of senators, partly churchmen, partly laymen, who should be independent of the aristocracy. This was the origin of the Court of Session, which, under various modifications, still forms the supreme law court in Scotland. In his general conduct, he took pains to repress the power and insolence of the nobles. Instead of employing them in his administration, he preferred church-dignitaries, and even lawyers. He also bestowed great encouragement upon the burghs—those bulwarks, in all ages except the present, against the power of the noblesse—and, to make sure that every department of the state was well administered, he followed the example of his father, by going frequently in mean disguises through the country. The result of these popular arrangements was, that he obtained from his people the endearing appellation of the *Poor Man's King*.


Some years of good government, and of consequent peace and prosperity, now ensued; so that Scotland

at length began to resume something like the same respectable aspect which it had exhibited under the reign of James the Fourth. A slight war with England occurred in 1533 ; but in general James kept on good terms with his tempestuous uncle, as well as with the kings of France and other countries. He employed a great deal of his time and revenue in building ships, and in improving his palaces, in the last of which works he engaged the architectural skill of Sir James Hamilton, called the bastard of Arran, who, strange to say, was equally distinguished for this elegant accomplishment, as for his sanguinary disposition in war. Linlithgow Palace, though now in ruins, is a monument of the taste of the monarch and his architect. James was also a poet, and a patron of poets. His Court boasted of a circle of literary men, who, though unable to make themselves be listened to in other countries, were still very respectable. Under his patronage the art of printing, which had been first introduced by his father in 1508, but had afterwards decayed, was permanently revived. One of the earliest books printed in the country, was a translation of Boece's History of Scotland into the Scottish language, which was professedly designed for the royal use, as well as for such young courtiers, his companions, as had "missed their Latin." In this reign, moreover, the Acts of Parliament were for the first time subjected to the press—an immense step in the march of civilization.

Upon the whole, it does not seem improbable that this gallant young sovereign, whose very person be-

tokened a noble and amiable character, would have been one of the best of all the independent kings of Scotland, but for one fatal circumstance—the breaking out of the Reformation. The political engagements under which he lay with the dignified ecclesiastics, unfortunately placed him, from the very first, in opposition to the progress of this grand moral revolution. Hence the glory of his reign is grievously darkened ; and even his premature death may be traced to this cause.

Before this period, as every reader is no doubt aware, Henry VIII. had repudiated at once his wife Catherine and the Catholic faith, and wedded himself simultaneously to Protestantism and Anne Bullen ; thereby rendering himself somewhat wealthier by the acquisition of the church lands, but at the same time a little more obnoxious to the enmity of the neighbouring countries of Europe. Finding a necessity for fortifying himself by all means in his new position, it early struck the mind of this imperious monarch, that the alliance of Scotland, which he had all along desired, would now be particularly useful to him, if not absolutely indispensable. On this account he immediately busied himself, with all the proverbial zeal of a new convert, to bring round his nephew to the same way of thinking with himself ; even offering him, it is said, his only child Mary to wife ; a species of temptation which his own experience might have already taught him to be very powerful. Here just lay one of the chief causes why James had not the good fortune *to become* a Protestant. The principles of the Re-



formation, presented to him in association with one of the most infamous tales of lust and cruelty that ever stained a nation's history, were rendered revolting to his mind at the very first. Henry made repeated efforts to bring him to a personal conference, in the hope of converting him: but James, who was much in the hands of the clergy, never found it convenient to afford his uncle that gratification. He was, moreover, tempted, as his father had been, to prefer the alliance of France to that of England.

In 1536, when the King had reached the age of twenty-five, he yielded to the pressing solicitations of his clerical advisers, by forming a matrimonial treaty with Maria de Bourbon, daughter of Charles Duke of Vendome. Having first done his best, according to the superstitious practice of the age, to propitiate the wind and weather by a pedestrian pilgrimage from Stirling to the shrine of Loretto, at Musselburgh, he undertook a voyage to France for the purpose of bringing the young lady home. Some circumstance, not explained in history, caused this match to be broken off. Probably he discovered on his arrival that the affections of the princess had been previously engaged by a rival of inferior rank, and had the generosity to resign her reluctant hand. It is at least certain that no quarrel took place, as he gave away the princess in marriage to the Count de Beauvais before he left France. He settled his affections upon Magdalen, eldest daughter to the King (Francis I.), whose hand he received on the 1st of January 1537, and

talented a nobleman, who, on the arrival of the royal party, returned with him to Scotland, but his services were not all that had ever been under which he had been employed; and the magnificent and the magnificent was calculated to enhance the glory of the occasion. Death, however, had laid and even his premature death, however James had seen her. cause.

Before this period, the country. The popular aware, Henry VIII. had as wide a scene of Catherine and the Catholic been under the ex-simultaneously to Protest that mournings thereby rendering himself acquisition of the church lands little more obnoxious to the ing countries of Europe. Fitting himself by all means to early struck the mind of this the alliance of Scotland, which stood, would now be particularly absolutely indispensable. already looked him new interest, way of the said.)

At this latter period of his reign James experienced considerable disturbance from the progress which the reformed doctrines began to make in the country. So far back as 1528, when he was under the power of the Douglasses, the clergy had resorted to the desperate expedient of burning a heretical divine, by way of giving a check to this growing danger. Some one remarked, however, with great truth, that the smoke of this sacrifice seemed to infect every one on whom it blew with the same notions. In spite of all the efforts of the priesthood, books explanatory of the new system of faith, and above all things copies of the Bible in English, were imported from the neighbouring country, and eagerly studied. Many men scrupled not to go about, at the hazard of life, preaching the new doctrines in secret places. To oppose the swelling tide of heresy, the clergy had nothing but their political influence in the state, which, great as it was, in reason of their wealth and learning, was just as ineffectual to check the growing evil, as is a fortified wall to prevent the birds of heaven from flying over a city. The immolation of seven persons in 1539, must be acknowledged that James conceived increased than diminished the mischief produced of.

Thus appears in the unfavourable light the Reformation, it is not to be inspired by a bigoted venality or their dogmas. He was a fligate lives generally led by

who, in the ensuing May, returned with him to Scotland.

The national rejoicings, on the arrival of the royal pair at Leith, were beyond all that had ever been known on any similar occasion; and the pageant which graced their entrance into the capital was conducted in a style of costly magnificence calculated to astonish a modern reader. Death, however, had laid a claim to Magdalen before ever James had seen her. She fell a victim to deeply seated consumption ere she had spent forty days in the country. The popular rejoicings were then converted into as wide a scene of lamentation. It is said to have been under the excitement of this remarkable calamity that mournings were first worn in Scotland.

Within a year after James negotiated another match; and, to the lasting misfortune of his country, it was with Mary daughter of the Duke of Guise, one of the principal branches of the royal family of France. This lady, who was both of hardier frame and more energetic mind than Queen Magdalen, came to Scotland in June, 1538; and the marriage was celebrated soon after at St. Andrew's. Within a short period she bore James two sons, who died, however, by a strange coincidence, within a few hours of each other, in 1541. Mary's last child was a daughter, born on the 7th of December, 1542; a creature rescued from the perils of infancy, so fatal to her brothers, only to be a conspicuous victim of the sterner evils proper to advanced life.

At this latter period of his reign James experienced considerable disturbance from the progress which the reformed doctrines began to make in the country. So far back as 1528, when he was under the power of the Douglasses, the clergy had resorted to the desperate expedient of burning a heretical divine, by way of giving a check to this growing danger. Some one remarked, however, with great truth, that the smoke of this sacrifice seemed to infect every one on whom it blew with the same notions. In spite of all the efforts of the priesthood, books explanatory of the new system of faith, and above all things copies of the Bible in English, were imported from the neighbouring country, and eagerly studied. Many men scrupled not to go about, at the hazard of life, preaching the new doctrines in secret places. To oppose the spreading tide of heresy, the clergy had nothing but their political influence in the state, which, great as it was by reason of their wealth and learning, was just as incompetent to check the growing evil, as is a fortified wall to prevent the birds of heaven from flying over a citadel. The immolation of seven persons in 1539, to which it must be acknowledged that James consented, rather increased than diminished the mischief they complained of.

Though the King thus appears in the unfavourable light of an opponent of the Reformation, it is not to be supposed that he was inspired by a bigoted veneration for either the clergy or their dogmas. He was quite sensible of the profligate lives generally led by

these men, and would sometimes even drive them out of his presence with violent expressions of censure and menace. While in secret he relished the satires which Lindsay, Buchanan, and other wits aimed against them, he made repeated efforts, in his legislative capacity, to correct their faults. In all probability his free and open nature would have induced him to permit a thorough reformation in his dominions, if cogent political reasons, and certain ambitious views, had not prompted him to take a contrary course.

Perhaps it was scarcely possible that England and Scotland could exist together under such different systems of religion without coming to blows; in the present case there were more than the ordinary reasons for a contest. In the first place, Henry could not, without great alarm, see James deliberately reject his alliance and cleave to the Catholic princes of the Continent, of whom, at this very time, the Pope was endeavouring to form a coalition against him. Next, James was encouraged by the Catholics to hope for the means of precipitating Henry from his throne as a heretic, and of succeeding to him as the next in blood. From all the causes combined, but especially the last, a war took place between the two countries in 1542.

The first move was made by Henry in the shape of an incursion into Scotland. Thirty thousand English, led by the Duke of Norfolk, entered the country in October, and were defeated at Haddenrig by about ten thousand Scots under the Earl of Huntly. This victory, which seemed to avenge the disaster of Flod-

len, and upon its very instrument,* raised the hopes of King James to an extravagant pitch ; and he prepared, by further levies, to follow up his advantage. Here, however, his resources failed him. The clergy had supplied the expenses of this war, but they had not furnished the men. These were not now to be procured by mere money. The reformed doctrines had already begun to affect the nobility ; the superciliousness with which James had treated them during his whole reign also rose upon their recollections ; reason further told them that the war was unnational and unjust. Hence, when James gathered them together at Fala on the road to England, instead of finding himself followed by a band of zealous partizans, ready to cut a way for him towards the English throne, he found a set of moody malcontents prepared to exercise an old privilege of the Scottish nobility, that of taking their sovereign to task about his conduct, with the view of pointing out to him a better course. They declared to him, that, finding the enemy had withdrawn, they saw no reason to invade England ; they would only act on the defensive. This disappointment, at such a moment of hope, seems to have chilled the very springs of life within the breast of the young monarch. Overwhelmed with a tumult of painful feelings, he dismissed the army, and returned to Edinburgh.

It might have been happy for him if he had now rested satisfied with the degree of misery allotted to

* The Earl of Surrey had become Duke of Norfolk.

him, and not sought to hazard his peace of mind any further. But an effort of the clergy, by which they raised an army of ten thousand men, induced him again to risk his fate. This force was marched to the western border, and had entered that piece of territory called the Debateable Land, when it was met by a small English party of observation, which had been gathered by two gentlemen of the district. At the moment when this party appeared, an odious favourite of the King, named Oliver Sinclair, was raised aloft upon a buckler, to read the royal commission appointing the Earl of Huntly commander; and the Scots, under the mistaken notion that this minion was himself appointed to the command, instantly fell into a mutiny, and became so confused as to lose the appearance of an army. The English party, which scarcely numbered four hundred men, took advantage of the accident, fell upon the Scots, and without the least effort produced a complete rout. A thousand men, including many nobles, were taken prisoners by an enemy not numbering upwards of five hundred.

James, in his anxiety for the fate of his little army, had advanced to Caerlaverock Castle, where he soon learned what had taken place. The effect of such a blow upon such a mind may be easily conceived. He retired to Falkland Palace, to mourn over the disaster in solitude, and was there almost immediately taken dangerously ill. While stretched on what he knew and felt to be his last bed, he received intelligence of the birth of his daughter at Linlithgow Palace. At such a moment, when just awaked from the hope of

securing the crown of England to himself and a hopeful posterity, to learn that he was leaving his own to a girl, who, even if she survived, would transfer it to another family, seemed to the gloomy mind of the monarch an overpowering stroke of Providence. He murmured forth that the crown had come into his family by a female, and that it would now go out of it with one; and, turning his face to the wall, as if the world were no longer a scene worth looking on, scarcely uttered another word till he died. He perished in the thirty-first year of his age, and the twenty-ninth of his reign.*

* The view here taken of James's motives for his last fatal war with England is original, but unquestionably correct. James had a party in England favourable to his views on the crown, being probably altogether formed of Catholics. It is also evident that his two matrimonial alliances were at the dictation of the Clergy—Betoun having been the ambassador who formed them. That the King of France was anxious for James's alliance, is proved by the pains he took to inveigle him into it, by the presents he gave him, and the appointment to a French bishopric with which he rewarded Betoun. When James was returning from France with Queen Magdalen, some discontent English came on board from Flamborough Head, and intreated him to invade England and make himself their king. He said he hoped within a twelvemonth to break a lance on an Englishman's breast. At that time, moreover, we are told that the English populace had numerous rhymes and ballads, in which the accession of the King of Scots to the throne of England was spoken of as very near. Some of these had a vaticinal character, and predicted the very time of his accession. Henry, in a letter to James, accused him of circulating these. The grounds of this claim must have been, that Henry had forfeited his right in consequence of his heresy, thereby annulling even the succession of his children.

CHAPTER IX.

MINORITY OF QUEEN MARY.

By the death of James V. Scotland was once more overtaken by the evils of a minority. The benefit of enjoying an adult sovereign, with power sufficient to keep the materials of the state in proper order, had been restored to the country only fourteen years before, after it had remained for a longer period in a state of anarchy. The same dark cheque-spot in its fate was now to recur, and under circumstances even more ominous than formerly. The heir, still younger than before, was now a female; while the country stood in a more delicate situation, in so far as the Reformation had given additional perplexity to its relations with France and England.

Two powers now existed in the country, being in some measure the germs of those parties which, under the title of Whig and Tory, or *liberal and illiberal*, yet divide the British commonwealth. First, there was the party, as yet chiefly consisting of noblemen, which desired to break up the grand system of the Church of Rome. Next, there was the party which espoused the cause of that church. Cardinal David *Betoun*, an aspiring and unprincipled personage, who

had been a chief agent of the late king in managing his connections with France, stood at the head of the latter faction, and presented a most formidable front to the reformers. He made an attempt at the very first to obtain the situation of Regent, from which he was only excluded by a simultaneous impulse of indignation on the part of the nobles, which caused them to revolt against one that had been instrumental in misleading their deceased sovereign, and in alienating him from their own counsels. They elected the Earl of Arran, who, failing the infant Mary, was heir to the crown, to fill that lofty office; and for some time they were even able to place the Cardinal under arrest. Those times, however, changed.

When Henry VIII. heard that the Scottish crown was left to a female infant, he formed the wish of accomplishing a matrimonial alliance between her and his son Edward, by which the two kingdoms might be at length united under one sovereign. Never dreaming that the Scots could have any serious objections to such a proposal, he discharged the lords taken at Solway, who were in general inclined to protestantism, with a commission to conciliate the Scottish parliament to his object, and to propose that the young bride should be instantly handed over to his keeping, together with as many of the principal fortresses of the kingdom, as might ensure him against a breach of treaty on the part of the Scots during the space which must elapse before she became marriageable. His precipitation, as might be expected, ruined the scheme. Such a proposal to a nation which had battled with

his predecessors and himself for three hundred years, and yet continued independent—which was even now at war with him—roused all the antipathies of the nation into action. The Regent, and in general all the party which anxiously wished for a reformation, heard it with some degree of patience, and at length gratified him so far as to agree to its being hung up for ten years, pledges being given for its eventual fulfilment. But, by doing so, they only lost their own power, and once more caused the ascendancy of the church party. Betoun, escaping from confinement, gained over the Regent to his side by acting upon some fears he entertained regarding his legitimacy, and soon mustered a party which, by taking advantage of the popular prejudices against England, was able at once to break off the treaty, and to supplant the reformers in the supreme power. The natural effect of this was, that the progress of the reformation was for the time suppressed. Arran had previously passed an act of parliament, permitting the Scriptures to be read in English; but he now became an apostate himself, and sanctioned the suppression of the new doctrines by every possible means, fire not excepted. Another consequence was, that Henry conceived the most violent antipathy against the Scots, and resolved to revenge what he esteemed their breach of faith by fire and sword.

A government was now erected in Scotland, at the head of which the Earl of Arran nominally stood, but which was, in reality, composed of Cardinal Betoun in *chief*, and of the Queen-mother, Mary of Guise, as

second. An assistant had been called in by Betoun, in the person of Matthew Earl of Lennox, son to that earl who was killed in 1525, at the battle of Linlithgow Bridge. But, as soon as his territorial influence was no longer required, he was shaken off by the unscrupulous churchman, and obliged to retire for his safety into England, where, it may be remarked, he soon after married the daughter of the late Queen Margaret, by her second husband, the Earl of Angus, through whom he became the father of Henry Lord Darnley, the future husband of Queen Mary.

Being fully aware of Henry's hostile intentions, this government applied to Rome and France for some auxiliaries to assist it in defending the country. But the vengeance of the English king came too speedily to allow of its receiving any such succour. In the spring of 1544, an army crossed the borders to ravage the frontier of the kingdom, at the same time that another, under the Earl of Hertford, sailed into the Firth of Forth, and landed at Leith. The Governor, as Arran was styled, being quite unprepared for resistance, sent the Provost of Edinburgh to inquire the cause of this hostile movement. Hertford replied, that the Scots had but two alternatives—to deliver up their Queen, that she might be united to Prince Edward; or to submit to the spoliation which he was prepared to execute upon them. An answer being returned, that the people of Scotland could not assent to so unjust a demand, the English commander advanced towards Edinburgh, set it on fire in several places, and proceeded to ravage the country to the

distance of ten or twelve miles in every direction. An attempt was also made upon the Castle of Edinburgh; but it resisted every effort. When he had so far executed his commission, he retired on ship-board, and set sail for England, having previously burnt the sea-port where his navy had cast anchor. Perhaps the earl might have prosecuted his vengeance further; but some political intrigues at the court of England required his instant presence. It is curious on this occasion to find the English congratulating themselves on the extent of damage which they committed upon Scotland; while the Scots, from their comparative indifference to the comforts of a state of peace, made but light of the disaster.

There is something quite surprising in the apathy displayed by the Scots throughout this whole war. Twice did the border army overrun the counties of Berwick and Roxburgh, and twice did they retire unannoyed. It was not till February, 1545, on a third invasion being made under Sir Ralph Ewers and Sir Brian Latoun, that the Earl of Angus was so much incensed at their desecration of the tombs of his ancestors in Melrose Abbey, as to forget that he belonged to what was called the *English party*, and to determine on resistance. For this purpose, he was released from prison by the governor and Betoun, who, though regarding him as an enemy to their party, and even as a partizan of King Henry, were still willing to employ the passion which had been accidentally kindled within him, since it tended to their *advantage*. Gathering about eight hundred men,

Angus advanced towards Jedburgh, where the English were lying, to the amount of five thousand; and, being reinforced by the Laird of Buccleuch, with a party of borderers, he did not hesitate to give battle to the enemy at Ancrum Moor. The fight took place in a marshy piece of ground, from which a heron arose, at the moment when the contending parties were about to close. This caused Douglas to cry, with the true spirit of one who loves fighting for its own sake, "Would that I had here my grey gos-hawk, so that we might all yoke at once." "Owing to a *ruse* on the part of the Scots, the English advanced in disorder, and in the full confidence of victory. Hence, on the Scots making a firm and vehement charge, they were unable to resist it, but fled with the utmost precipitation. In the rout which followed, an immense number of the fugitives were slain, falling a sacrifice to the cruel spirit of the Scots, which was exasperated by their long-continued aggressions on the country.

It is said that when Henry heard of this unfortunate affair, he uttered bitter threats of vengeance against the Earl of Angus, to whom he had afforded protection during the whole reign of James V., and who, indeed, might have been considered more an English than a Scottish subject. The Earl only remarked, when he was told of King Henry's threats, "Ay, and is my brother of England wroth at my having revenged the breaking of my forefathers' tombs at Melrose? They were better men than he, and I could in honour do no less. And will he take

This they did with so little noise, that the Cardinal, who lay in bed, did not know his danger till the voices of the conspirators were heard at his chamber door. They procured admission by a sort of capitulation, and, in the most cold-blooded manner imaginable, slew him as he sat in his chair. After this they trailed the inanimate corpse to the battlements, and flung it forth to the gaze of the people, upon the very place where he had sat a few weeks before, in all the pride of uncontrolled power, to behold the death of the protestant martyr. They then prepared to defend themselves in the castle against the authority of the Governor. Being joined by about a hundred and forty persons of their own sentiments, they held out for upwards of a twelvemonth against the authority of that personage, Henry VIII. openly aiding them in a cause which stood so directly opposed to that at present triumphant in Scotland. At length, on the Governor procuring the proper means of carrying on a siege from France, they were obliged to capitulate. No judicial notice, however, was ever taken of the Cardinal's death; though it was observed, that all of those present came to deaths more or less violent. One was executed nearly thirty years after, for a crime of which he was not guilty.*

In the beginning of the ensuing year the Kings of England and France, who for upwards of thirty years had exercised so strong an influence over the fortunes of Scotland, died within three months of each other; and while the latter country fell into the hands of

* Kirkaldy, of Grange.

Henry II. a sovereign of full age, son to the preceding monarch, England became subject to the Earl of Hertford (who had invaded Scotland two years before), the uncle and guardian of the minor Edward VI. This nobleman, who is much better known by his title of Duke of Somerset, or his official designation of Protector, inherited Henry's ambitious views regarding Scotland, and resolved to prosecute the war with even greater zeal. He entered the country in September, 1547, holding out the same alternatives as before, that either the Scots should consent to match their Queen to his nephew, or expect to see their territory subjected to all the horrors of military execution.

It is impossible to imagine the bitter indignation with which almost all classes of the people were animated on this occasion. England and the Protestant religion were confounded together, for the time, in one universal feeling of mingled wrath and horror. From every part of the country, even from the far Highlands and Isles, men poured to join the standard of the Governor, who was therefore very soon able to face the invader with a force more than equal to his own. Somerset had pitched his army on the heights above the mouth of the river Esk, at Musselburgh, six miles from the capital; and in the neighbouring bay lay a fleet ready to co-operate with his land forces, and to supply them with provisions. Arran posted his battalions on the opposite bank of the Esk, so as to protect the city; and there the two armies lay for several days, mutually contemplating each

other with feelings of the deepest national hate. It is believed that Somerset was at length so much distressed by the failure of his supplies, as to form the resolution of retiring into England ; and we are even told by the Scottish historians, that he began to make movements for that purpose. It was then the obvious policy of the Scots to permit him to commence his retreat, and afterwards to have harassed him with skirmishing parties amidst the defiles of the Lammermoors, through which he would have to pass on his way home. But the fervid feelings which animated the Scots would not admit of any such calculations. Perceiving, or thinking he perceived, some uneasy flutterings in the English army, the Governor sent a vanguard of ten thousand men, under the Earl of Angus, to cross the river and draw on a battle. The remaining divisions followed as fast as a narrow bridge, over which they had to pass, would permit. At the approach of Angus, the English cavalry rushed forward to make the attack. They were received with firmness by the Scots, who, forming a compact square, and presenting their long spears on every side, resembled more than any thing else a castle stuck round with spikes. The English soon retired from an enemy upon whom they could make so little impression, and the Protector then commenced a flank fire with his artillery, which caused the Earl of Angus to shift his position a little, so as to gain protection from the swelling ground to his right. The two rear divisions of the Scottish army saw this movement, which *they supposed* to be a retreat, and being at the same

ne galled by a flank fire from the ships, a shameful panic seized them, and they retired precipitately across the river. Angus, now deprived of support, was unable any longer to resist the weight of the English legions; he also commenced a retreat. In the case which ensued, it is supposed that eight thousand of the Scots fell beneath the English sword, a number far greater than they could have lost in the most roughly contested battle, supposing they had stood on their ground. The whole space between Musselburgh and Edinburgh was strewn with dead bodies, and with arms thrown away by the fugitives. This unfortunate affair was called the battle of Pinkie, from a house belonging to the abbacy of Dunfermline, which stood in the neighbourhood of the place where Angus met the English cavalry, and where the only fighting took place. It was the last, and almost the only battle fought by the Scots in behalf of the Catholic religion; and its bad success perhaps shews that the nation was not calculated to fight well in such a cause. It is even probable, although cries of "Down with the heretic dogs," were heard to pass from the Scottish army to the English, that in reality the tendency to the reformed doctrines which the people had already manifested, went so far to counteract the strong feeling of indignation against the enemy which caused and inspired the campaign, as to have a material effect in producing the panic flight, which otherwise is not very well accounted for.

The consequences of the battle of Pinkie were not so decisive in favour of the English as might have

been expected. Somerset advanced to Edinburgh, but was unable to make any impression upon it. He took possession of Leith, and his fleet reduced and threw garrisons into various small fortifications within the Firth of Forth. But there his conquest ended. He soon after found it necessary to retire to England, to attend to interests more nearly affecting himself.

After his defeat, the Governor had retired to Stirling. There he soon after called a council of the nobility, to which he proposed, as the best means of putting an end to the annoying demands of England, that the young Queen should be transmitted to France, and married to the Dauphin. Under the influence of exasperated feelings, the majority of those present assented to his proposal.

As might be expected, Henry II. eagerly grasped at an offer which promised his race the long-disputed property of Scotland. To the request of the Scots that he would transmit them some auxiliaries, he at once assented; six thousand French landed next year, under a commander of the name of D'Essé, and immediately proceeded to lay siege to those places of strength in which Somerset had planted garrisons. While besieging the town of Haddington, which was the principal dépôt of the English, a treaty was ratified between the two nations, and the marriage finally agreed upon. A party had been mustered against the proposal; but it was of no avail against a measure so consonant with the existing prejudices of the nation. French money, moreover, was employed in reconciling those who were but slightly disaffected. The

governor himself was rewarded with a pension of twelve thousand francs, and the title of Duke of Castelherault.

In consequence of this ill-omened treaty, Mary, who was now six years of age, was brought from the bower of Inchmahome, in the lake of Monteith, where she had remained since the invasion of 1544, and shipped on board the French vessels at Dumbarton, from whence she was speedily conveyed to France. As it was thus evidently by a general resolution of the nation, that Mary was subjected to a Catholic education, the severe treatment which she afterwards experienced on this account, when the majority of her subjects had become Protestant, must appear the more cruel and unreasonable. At the same time it affords a curious view of the course which human events may sometimes take, that the impetuosity and ambition of Henry VIII. should have been the primary cause of her assuming the Catholic religion, and the jealousy of his daughter Elizabeth the cause of her becoming one of its martyrs. The sufferings of this princess at the hands of the family of Tudor, were certainly great.

A number of circumstances connected with the regency or protectorship of England, now brought that country to ratify a solemn peace with France, in which Scotland was included. An interval of quiet then occurs, during which the Governor Arran, or Chastelherault, remained in quiet possession of his authority in Scotland, while Mary continued under the pupilage of her uncles, the princes of the house of Guise, who, during this reign, enjoyed supreme influ-

ence at the French court. The calm was for the first time disturbed in 1553, by the death of Edward VI. the boy-patron of the Reformation, and the accession of his sister Mary, whose atrabilious character and austere catholicism instantly gave a different turn to the interests of the new faith. The restoration of popery in England as effectually depressed the opposite cause in Scotland as the presence of a thunder-cloud at the distance of a day's journey will cause a fall in that sensitive fluid which composes the barometer. Under favour of these circumstances, the French court was able to procure the deposition of the Duke of Chastelherault from his office of Governor, and to place Mary of Guise, the Queen-mother, in his place. This lady, who acceded to her new situation in April, 1554, was a woman of energetic character, thoroughly devoted to the interests of the ancient faith, and to her brothers, the leaders of the French court. Yet, notwithstanding all obstacles, the new doctrines silently and irresistibly gained their way in the hearts of men. Hitherto repressed rather by the prejudice against England and the English match, than by any authority of the government, they required only a certain interval of peace, after the action of those causes of wrath had passed away, in order to obtain their just and natural influence over the public mind.

It ought to be explained at this point, that the Catholic church, before the Reformation, was characterized by the same features in Scotland as in most other countries, though there were, or had been, some points of difference.

At an early period of the history of Scotland, when attempt was made to reduce it under the ecclesiastical authority of the Archbishop of York, a resistance almost as fierce and uncompromising as that which was presented against the political designs of Edward I. displayed the comparative independence of the people upon the powers of Rome. It is also observable, that when the Pope thought proper to excommunicate Robert Bruce, the people were very little affected by what, in most other countries, would have operated as a complete remission of the national allegiance. Through all succeeding ages of their history, up to the reign of King James IV. the Scots showed themselves to be among the most intractable of the subjects of the Vatican, partly from the difficulty of getting a legate to execute the papal warrants in such a rude country, and partly from that wild spirit of independence which has been so often alluded to as characterising the people. It was not without considerable justice that, when Elizabeth's Commissioners, at the trial of Queen Mary, in 1568, presented the old claim of paramountcy over Scotland, Maitland of Lethington made his famous reply, "that Scotland was more free than England herself had been of late, when she paid Peter's pence to Rome." This degradation, which the bigot Mary had caused her people to submit to, was certainly unknown in Scottish history.

If the Scottish church was thus independent before the Reformation, it was equally free of the great vices

which characterised the catholic system in other countries. Previous to the reign of James V., when vitiated by their connection with the state, and induced to take desperate 'expedients for the support of their tottering system, the clergy appear to have possessed many virtues, and indeed to have been in no respect reprehensible, except so far as they were, wittingly or unwittingly, instrumental in keeping the national mind in darkness. In those earlier times, ere their endowments had become too much for virtue, we find them characterised by chastity, by learning, and by public spirit. What, for instance, can be more amiable than the character of Bishop Wardlaw, of St. Andrew's, who, being desired by his chamberlain to limit the hospitalities of his palace, and appoint only a certain few who should have the privilege of his table, mentioned Fife and Angus as two of the guests he should like always to entertain—thereby meaning two populous districts belonging to his see? This person had condemned a priest to death for the Wickliffe heresy: but he also erected the university of St. Andrew's,—a lamp from which a whole nation might catch that very illumination, which, with the shortsightedness of the age, he wished to extinguish in an individual. In a later age, what can be more dignified or worthy than the character of Bishop Kennedy, who saved the crown to his sovereign, and was lamented at his death, as if every man in the realm had lost a friend? What, again, more amiable than that of Bishop Elphinstone, of Aberdeen, founder of the college at that city, the patron of learning, the con-

uctor of every description of public work that could be useful to his fellow-creatures, and who felt so deeply the calamities of the nation at the battle of Flodden, as never to be afterwards seen with a smile on his face, till his noble mind sunk under the weight of his grief, and found relief in the common grave of his king and country? Nor is it to be supposed that these instances of worth, which could be easily multiplied, were isolated in a system which prohibited general profligacy: the existence of merit among the dignitaries, sanctions a supposition that the inferior officers were also worthy; while the utter silence of the minute and familiar chroniclers of the period, renders it almost certain that no extensive system of moralization was known. It must also be remembered, that however inapplicable as a system of religious instruction, the church was the sole depository and vehicle of the learning of the age. Even in the ætious era of James V., we find the English ambassador himself forming an excuse for that sovereign's partiality to the counsels of his clergy, fatal as it was to the interests of his own master, by acknowledging the superior information and tact of that body, as contrasted with the nobility. There is still another, though a more equivocal merit in the catholic church: the circumstance that the first reformers were members of it. Of course, the merits which might attach to the mere characters of individuals can be held as no recommendation of a bad system, no more than it would be thought proper to retain the services of an idle or dishonest domestic, because he happened to

pamphlet published by Martin Luther, for the purpose of bewildering the minds of the faithful. If the Bishop of Dunkeld of that day was a fair specimen of his order, the whole were certainly in a deplorable condition. It is related of this worthy shepherd of the Church, that being informed of one of his clergy, the Vicar of Dollar, who preached every Sunday from the Epistles and Gospels of the day, he desired him to forbear ; or if he could find a good gospel or a good epistle which made for the liberty of *holy Kirk*, to preach that, and let the rest alone. The Vicar answering that he had read both the New Testament and the Old, and had never found an ill gospel or an ill epistle in any of them ; the Bishop replied, " I thank God I have lived well these many years, and never knew either the Old or New ; I content me with my Porteous and Pontifical ; and if you, Dean Thomas, leave not these fantasies, you will repent them when you cannot mend it." The Vicar was accordingly burnt soon after, on the Castle hill of Edinburgh, as a Reforming heretic. The truth is, the only religion understood or taught by these men, consisted in the repetition of prayers to the Saints, in penitential practices, and in a thorough belief in the supreme authority of the Pope. Neither the beneficed clergy, nor the monks who resided in the numerous monasteries, ever preached. Rendered quite independent by their endowments, they lived in a state of complete abstraction, wrapt up in their own comforts, and practising, it is said, many degrading vices.

The only members of the Church who could then

said to do any thing for mankind, were the Begging, or Preaching Friars, (*Fratres Mendicantes*), who constantly went from one place to another in humble attire, and, as their name bespeaks, delivered sermons to the people, in return for which they begged small donations. Lindsay, alluding to this body, says:—

“Were it not for the preaching frieres,
Gane were the faith of the seculieres.”

and yet is said that even these men latterly became wealthy and indolent like the rest. Buchanan relates that when one of their establishments was broken up at Perth, there was as much salted meat found in their barrels, although it was near the end of the season, as might have maintained the whole inmates for a twelvemonth. And he puns upon their name, saying that they ought rather to have been called *Fratres Manducantes*, the Chewing or Eating Friars, than the *Fratres Mendicantes*, which referred to their primitive character as beggars.

A controversy which arose among the churchmen themselves in the year 1550, and of which Spottiswood the historian gives a curious relation, may communicate to the reader a very vivid idea of their besotted ignorance and stupidity. “One Richard Marshall, Prior of the Black Friars at Newcastle, in England, had been in St. Andrews, and in one of his sermons taught that the *Pater Noster* should be said to God only, and not unto the saints. Some Doctors of the University, taking exception against his doctrine, stirred up a grey friar called Friar Tottis, to confute him, and prove that the *Pater Noster* might be said unto the saints. The

friar, an audacious and ignorant fellow, took the matter in hand, and, reading this text out of the fifth of Matthew's Gospel, 'Blessed are the poor in spirit, for unto them belongeth the Kingdom of Heaven,' gathered upon it, 'That the Pater Noster might be said unto the saints, because all the petitions in the prayer,' said he, 'appertain to the saints. For if we meet an old man in the street, we will say, Good morrow father, much more in our prayers may we call the saints *our fathers*. And seeing we grant they are in heaven, we may say to every one of them, Our father which art in heaven. Then we know,' said he, 'God hath made their names *holy* : therefore we may say to every one of them, Hallowed be thy name. And as they are in the kingdom of heaven, so that kingdom is theirs by possession ; therefore, when we pray for the kingdom of heaven, we may say unto any of them, Thy kingdom come. In like manner, except their will had been the will of God, they had never come to that kingdom ; therefore, seeing their will is God's will, we say to every one of them, Thy will be done.' But when he came to the fourth petition, he was much troubled to find a colour for it, confessing it was not in the saints' power to give us daily bread. ' Yet they may pray,' said he, ' to God for us, that he will give us our daily bread.' The like gloss he made upon the rest of the petitions, but with so little satisfaction to the hearers, that they fell a-laughing, and the children meeting him in the streets did cry and call him Friar Pater-noster ; whereof he grew so ashamed that he left the city."

This affair was not yet done. For some time after, the Doctors of the University, and the whole clergy of the city, occupied themselves in wranglings about the proper object of the Lord's prayer, starting and patronising a thousand scholastic subtleties, rather than acknowledge the obvious fact that it is addressed to the Deity. It was no wonder, when the public instructors suffered themselves to be so far misled from common sense, that simple clowns should have dared to think for themselves. Spottiswood further relates that the mighty question was at length given up by the learned men of St. Andrews, to be decided at a provincial Synod, which was to meet some time after at Edinburgh. During the interval, "a simple fellow that served the sub-prior in his chamber, thinking there was some great matter in hand that made the Doctors to convene so often, asked him one night as he went to bed, what the matter was. The Sub-prior merrily answering, 'Tom, (that was the fellow's name), we cannot agree to whom the Pater-noster should be said,' he quickly replied, 'Sir, whom to should it be said but to God?' 'Then,' said the Sub-prior, 'what shall we do with the saints?' Tom answered, 'Give them *aves* and *credes* enow in the devil's name, for that may suffice them.' This answer going abroad, many said that Tom had given a wiser decision than all the doctors had done with their distinctions."

CHAPTER X.

THE REFORMATION.

To resume the current of our history.—It was soon found by the Queen Regent that she had acceded to no easy seat, and that, without a French standing army, she would be unable to preserve the interests of the church, and of her French relatives. The reformed doctrines were not now confined, as before, to apostate friars, and to certain orders of the people. They were beginning to work their way among the gentry, or lesser barons, and to have greater effect than ever among the nobility; men who, in addition to other reasons for patronising the Reformation, had the strong motive of cupidity; the dissolution of the church promising to them, as in England, a vast harvest of territorial grants. Persons of this order did not now scruple to entertain the emissaries of reform in their own houses. Every where there prevailed a tone of ridicule and hostility against the church.

The change of the popular feeling—for the spirit which had raised the country in opposition to the English match was, as already mentioned, much decayed—soon manifested itself in popular riots against the domination of the French soldiery, and in a gene-

ral spirit of insubordination to the Queen Regent's authority. It was seen necessary by her, or her advisers, that a larger body of French troops should be maintained in the country ; and for this purpose she took the proper measures for imposing a land tax. So ungracious a measure effectually roused the reformed gentry. Three hundred of them met at Edinburgh, and represented to her that, if the country should be threatened by any foreign enemies, they themselves could defend it with their vassals, as their ancestors had done before them. She was obliged to give up the project. Next year, the clergy were alarmed by the powerful preaching of John Knox, a reformed friar, of peculiar boldness and energy of character, as well as the most enthusiastic piety, who, after an absence of some years in other countries, had returned to his native land, for the purpose of assisting in what he called "the good work." On this person being cited to answer for his heretical dogmas before an ecclesiastical council, such a large assemblage of gentlemen favourable to his doctrines appeared in arms to protect him—a regular custom in Scotland when the accused individual was the *protégé* of a party—that the clergy were obliged to give up the design of prosecuting him. The Church was now weakened by a circumstance unconnected with the hostile party. The Queen Dowager, on her accession to the government, had degraded the Archbishop of St. Andrews from his dignity as Chancellor of the Kingdom, and thereby rendered him an enemy. This dignitary, as the brother (though an illegitimate one) of the ex-Regent Chastelherault, and

a man of powerful mind, had been the leader of the clergy since the death of Betoun. By offending such a person, the Queen placed herself in the strange predicament of being no great favourite with that very body whose interests she professed to protect, and who ought, in such circumstances, to have been her chief supporters.

The weakness of her government was testified in a remarkable manner in the year 1556. France having then entered into a war with Spain, whose sovereign, Philip II. had become the husband of the English Queen, an army of English was sent to the assistance of the latter country; on which the French Court thought it but right to employ Scotland, which was already, or would soon become, an appanage of their crown, to make a diversion by declaring war against England. Mary, in obedience to the directions of her brothers, caused her French troops to make hostile manifestations on the frontier of England, and required her subjects to meet in arms for the purpose of invading that country. To her great mortification, she found it absolutely impossible to form an army for such a purpose. So much already of the old Scottish spirit of hostility against the English was effaced from the public mind, by the influence of a common religion.

Such being the state of the national feeling, nothing but some exasperating circumstance was required to bring on a struggle for mastery between the reformed and non-reformed powers of the state. That *was* supplied two years after, when the death of the

English persecutrix Mary, re-established the Protestant faith in that kingdom under Elizabeth. This princess, in the view of all Protestants, was the legitimate heir of the crown, as the daughter of Henry VIII. by his wife Anne Bullen. All Catholics, however, both British and foreign, and at their head the Roman Pontiff himself, disowned her right, alleging that the union of her father and mother, as carried into effect in opposition to the bull of the Pope, was not a lawful marriage. This body of Christians esteemed her as an illegitimate usurper, and represented the young Queen of Scotland, who was now receiving her education at the French Court, as the real heiress of the crown of England. In an evil hour for the peace of Queen Mary, her French protectors resolved upon asserting this equivocal title. She was married April 1558. to Francis the Dauphin, and every piece of plate, and almost every article of furniture belonging to the young pair, were impressed with a coat armorial, in which the arms of England were quartered with those of Scotland and France. By one stroke of fate, the restoration of the Catholic faith in England, and the establishment of Mary upon the throne of that kingdom, were identified; and, at an age when she could not be expected to comprehend any political relations whatever, she unconsciously became an object of jealousy and hate to the English Protestants, including their Queen, and the subject of fearful forebodings to such of her own natural subjects as were of the same persuasion.

The adoption of these ambitious views by the family

of Guise necessarily implied that every exertion should be made to repress the progress of the reformed doctrines in Scotland. The Queen-Regent, at the direction of her brothers, began to take strong measures for this purpose. At the celebration of the festival of St. Giles, in Edinburgh, a statue of that holy man was customarily carried through the streets upon a sort of litter, to receive the adorations of the crowd. Previous to this festival in 1558, some wicked Protestant stole the statue from its proper niche in the High Church, and threw it into a lake to the north of the city. In this emergency the priests were compelled to borrow a substitute statue from the neighbouring monastery of grey friars, which, with unblushing impudence, they proceeded to carry through the streets, as if nothing had happened. The ridicule of the occasion was too much to be withstood; first, a jostling commenced in the crowd; then, the priests who formed the procession, were driven violently against each other; finally, as the hubbub increased, the litter which supported the statue was thrown down, and *young St. Giles*, as the populace termed him, being seized irreverently by the lower extremities, was dashed in such a manner against the pavement, as to lose both head and arms. "Then," as John Knox mirthfully informs us in his history of the Reformation, "a great affray" took place among the attendants; "the grey friars gaped, the black friars blew, the priests panted and fled, and happy was he who first got to the house, for such a sudden fray never came among the generation of Antichrist within this realm before."

The Queen Regent thought this a favourable opportunity for inflicting a blow upon the reformers, and she permitted the Archbishop of St. Andrews, to whom she had latterly been reconciled, to burn an aged priest, who was found guilty of preaching the new doctrines.

The Protestants now saw it to be necessary to take some decisive measures for their preservation. They entered into a general bond, or covenant, by which they obliged themselves to peril every thing, even life itself, in resisting the tyrannical proceedings which the Queen Regent or the clergy might institute against any individual of their number. To this the Earls of Argyle and Glencairn, and many other persons of high influence, set their names; and in brief space the reforming party became regularly formed, as its opinions were openly avowed.

Mary, some time previously, had been glad to flatter the reforming lords with smooth words and fair promises, in order that they might favour her with their votes in parliament for an act to equalize Francis the dauphin with his wife in the sovereignty of Scotland; * but now, when that object was attained, she

* It was a custom of Scotland, that a peeress in her own right, or any ordinary heiress, conferred her titles, whether real or of courtesy, upon her husband. In compliance with this practice, it was thought proper that Mary's husband should become as much *king* of Scotland as she was *queen*. Hence, after this act of parliament, all public documents ran in the name of Francis and Mary, he being generally styled *King Dauphin*. The necessity of an act of parliament for such an extension of sovereignty, may be considered as a point in favour of parliamentary title.

willingly forgot all those dalliances. Upon a deputation being sent to her to remind her of her promises, she exclaimed, in the spirit attributed to her unhappy religion, "The promises of princes ought not to be claimed with rigour: they are only binding when subservient to our conveniency and pleasure." And she added a threat, that the reforming ministers should be banished from Scotland, "though they were to preach as soundly as St. Paul." The commissioners replied, with becoming spirit, that if these were her sentiments, they must renounce their allegiance, and cease to be her subjects.

Some time after, hearing that Paul Methven, one of the apostles of the reformed doctrines, was preaching in Perth, Mary summoned the provost, Lord Ruthven, to her presence, and commanded him to go and suppress those tumultuous assemblages, which every day took place within his jurisdiction. This dignitary replied, in a very spirited manner, that he had power over the bodies and goods of his townsmen, and these he should place at her command; but he had no power over their minds and consciences. She was much offended at this answer, and granted commission to the provost of the rival town of Dundee to put her desires into execution. But even here she was foiled. The Provost of Dundee, though he might have been willing to execute any royal warrant against Perth under ordinary circumstances, hesitated on the present occasion, and gave Paul Methven a hint to make his escape. The Queen then resolved upon making an effort against the whole body of the

preachers, and summoned them to appear before her on the 10th of May, 1559, at the town of Stirling.

On the 2d of May, in obedience to an invitation from the leaders of the party, John Knox arrived at Edinburgh from Geneva. He found the whole population in a flame regarding the Queen's summons, and preparations made in every province to accompany their preachers in arms to the court, so as to protect them from violence. He advanced with a great band of the people of Angus to Perth, which was destined to be the strong hold of the Reformation for a certain time; and Erskine of Dun, an eminent reforming baron, was deputed to inform the Queen of their intentions.

Mary was alarmed at this popular manifestation, which she had no immediate means of resisting, and, to gain a temporary advantage, she gave Erskine a promise that, if the people would consent to disperse, she should desert the diet against the ministers. On this being communicated to the multitudes assembled at Perth, they willingly yielded to her wishes, expecting, of course, to hear no more of the intended prosecution. What was their surprise on the 10th of May, when it was discovered that the Queen denounced the ministers as rebels, for not appearing at Stirling. She had returned to her maxim, that there was no necessity for keeping her word, except when it was convenient.

While the minds of men were fired with indignation at this second instance of perfidy, John Knox

mounted the pulpit at Perth, to preach what historians call his "thundering" sermon against idolatry. The bulk of the army which had assembled at this city during the previous week, was gone; only the leaders remained. His audience, however, comprised the inhabitants of the town, who had already distinguished themselves not a little by their attachment to the reformed doctrines. After a violent harangue against the superstitions of the Catholic faith, seasoned with pointed allusions to the wicked government of the Queen Regent, a priest entered the church to say mass, thinking no doubt that the exhibition of one of the holiest rites of the church would have the effect of neutralising the inflammatory appeal of the reformer. This was opposing straw to steel, or seeking to stop the current of a hurricane with a gilded fan. A stone thrown by a boy, which broke one of the little glass cases containing the images of the saints, was the signal for a simultaneous attack upon the ornaments of the church. Altars, pictures, statues, painted windows, all those objects which for ages had inspired and assisted the devotion of the people, were in a few minutes demolished, and madly trampled under foot, men appearing just the more infuriated against them, in proportion as they loathed the moral tyranny of which they had been the implements and the symbols. Nor was the work of destruction to rest here. The crowd proceeded from this church to the monasteries of the black and grey friars, and finally to a convent of Carthusians, all of which they dismantled in a similar

manner. In two days, we are told, nothing was left of these establishments but the bare walls; every thing else was either destroyed by the mob, or carried off by the monks. John Knox assures us, and we can fully believe the allegation, that on this occasion the populace showed a noble disregard of personal profit. No one, according to him, appropriated a single article, though thousands of valuable things lay at their disposal; the one grand passion under which they acted, had so completely overpowered every other.

Mary, on learning what had taken place, was so extremely incensed as to vow that she would expiate the outrage by the blood of the citizens. Learning that the reformers were again gathering towards Perth, she sent letters to her friends, the Earls of Athol, Arran, and Argyle, commanding them to attend her with their followers; and, collecting all the French soldiers in the kingdom, she prepared to set forward from Stirling. On the other hand, the leaders of the Congregation, as they now termed themselves, summoned all their partizans to Perth, in order to make a stand against her. Such was the zeal of the Earl of Glencairn on this occasion, that, finding all the low-country roads guarded, and all the bridges broken down, by the Queen Regent, he led his company, consisting of two thousand five hundred men, over the hills from Ayrshire, and through all the intermediate rivers, till he reached the rendezvous at Perth. It is told, that every individual in the army wore a cord of six quarters in length round his neck, where-

with he might be hanged if he should flee, and with which, in the event of victory, he might hang the French soldiers.* Mary arrived on the 22d at Auchterarder, a few miles from Perth, having been detained for some days by the difficulty of bringing forward her artillery.

The Congregation had employed the interval in writing letters of remonstrance to all the powers opposed to them. To the Queen herself they sent a respectful manifesto, avowing sincere respect for her person as their lawful ruler, and also unfailing allegiance to Francis and Mary, King and Queen of Scotland, but assuring her that they would encounter every hazard before resigning the arms which they had taken up for the purpose of securing liberty of conscience. To the clergy they wrote in furious terms, threatening, that unless religious persecution was stopped, they should proclaim an exterminating war against its authors, and not spare any one who might fall into their hands. They beseeched the nobility who attended the Queen, to give them a hearing in open parliament; and they told the French commander, D'Oysel, that if his followers began a war on this account with the people of Scotland, they should never find it at an end so long as the race existed.

The Queen Regent was so far affected by their bold language, and the accounts she heard of their numbers, as to think it advisable to make them an overture

* Hence, perhaps, the phrase, "A St. Johnston's tippet," signifying a halter; St. Johnston being the ancient and popular name of Perth.

for a capitulation ; a course of conduct the more prudent on her part, as it promised to afford her time for increasing her army from France, while the insurgents would more probably lose both numbers and enthusiasm by delay. A treaty was accordingly entered into on the 29th of May, the substance of which was, that all things were to be left to the next parliament, the Reformers, in the mean time, quitting Perth, and the Queen engaging that no French garrison should be left in it. Before disbanding, the Congregation entered into a new and still more solemn bond of mutual defence, and the Earl of Argyle and the prior of St. Andrew's, who had acted as the Queen's envoys, though secretly inclined to the cause of Reform, promised to the insurgents that, on the first breach of faith on the part of that personage, they should no longer remain in her service, but instantly declare for the Congregation.

The individual last mentioned was destined to act so conspicuous a part in the history of the next age, that he well deserves some particular notice. He was a natural son of King James V., and consequently a brother of Queen Mary. When a mere child, his father had conferred upon him the priory of St. Andrew's ; and, but for the breaking out of the Reformation, he might perhaps have spent a noteless life, as a mere church dignitary. The stir of that great event had roused his young spirit into vivid action, and opened up prospects, which the ambition resulting from his peculiar birth caused him to seize with great eagerness. Lord James Stuart, as he was called after this

period, possessed, with all his secret aspirations, much natural worth, much correct feeling, great public spirit, and withal a degree of sagacity and temperance which alike gave him command over himself and his fellows. Thoroughly brave, like his illustrious progenitors, his knowledge of military tactics was superior to any thing with which his own countrymen were acquainted; and he was gifted in an especial degree with what may be called the art of government. Though only twenty-seven years of age, and thrown into the world with little fortune besides his name, already had he figured in diplomatic transactions of great national weight, and made such an advance in the affections of the people as to raise a fear for the security of the crown in its legitimate possessor. He required but to declare himself in favour of the Congregation, in order to place himself at the head of that large party, which was destined so soon to become the leading one in the state.

It required but little time to prove the futility of the last treaty. Mary, on the very day of her entry into the town, introduced French soldiers. One of them, either by chance or design, shot a boy, the son of a violent reformer; which only drew from her the inhumane remark, "that the circumstance was much to be regretted, in so far as it was the son and not the father." Instead of respecting the citizens, as she had promised in the treaty, she banished some and fined others. She also appointed a papist provost, and left strict orders that the Catholic form of religion should alone be exercised in the town. These

proceedings very quickly reached the ears of the Reformers, and only five days after they had dispersed their last army, they prepared to assemble it once more. The Earl of Argyle and Lord James Stuart now judged it proper to join them. On this occasion the rendezvous was at St. Andrew's, while the Queen Regent assembled her army at Falkland.

In the mean time John Knox was no inactive agent. He preached on the 9th of June at Crail, a sea-port in the eastern angle of Fife, and the next day at Anstruther, a neighbouring town. At both places the shrines of Catholicism were immediately defaced. He had announced his intention of preaching on the 11th of the month in the cathedral of St. Andrew's. Archbishop Hamilton garrisoned it before hand with a hundred soldiers. Knox advanced like a devoted knight of the days of chivalry, to redeem his pledge. At his approach the enthusiasm of the people gave Hamilton the alarm, and he withdrew with his men. The reformer then preached a sermon in the parish church ; and that very day the cathedral was destroyed. A building little inferior in size to St. Paul's, at London, and which had been reared by the labour of a hundred and fifty-nine years, was destroyed by an infuriated mob in a single afternoon.

When the Queen Regent learned what had taken place at St. Andrew's, she was incensed to the last degree, and immediately ordered her army to march thither. The Lords of the Congregation had as yet no followers collected. However, they were so con-

fidant of immediate accessions of strength as to take possession of Cupar that night with only a hundred of their body servants. Next day three thousand were at their command. It seemed, says John Knox, as if men rained from the clouds. With this force Lord James Stuart took up a position in the moor of Cupar, and awaited the advance of the Queen's host. Again Mary was daunted by the bold front of the Reformers. She succeeded in forming another treaty with them, agreeing to withdraw her army out of Fife, and to appoint within eight days a committee of nobles to settle a further and permanent truce. In consequence of this, the Lords of the Congregation disbanded their troops, and retired peaceably to St. Andrew's.

A third time the Queen's faith was broken. The commission never was appointed. After full time was allowed, the reforming leaders resolved to re-assemble their troops, and correct the breaches which had taken place in the former treaty at Perth. Marching thither, they soon expelled the Catholic garrison, and re-appointed a Protestant magistracy. On the succeeding day, some of their number suggested, that while they were here they should take order (this was the favourite phrase), with the neighbouring abbacy of Scone, which was tenanted, it seems, by a most flagitious fraternity of monks. The suggestion was at once adopted. A mob immediately proceeded to that monastery, and although some of the leading men, and even the austere Knox himself, endeavoured to save it, inspired probably by veneration for the historical

character of the edifice,* it was set fire to and burnt to the ground.

The Reformers were now induced, partly by a confidence in their cause, and partly by a sense that it was necessary, to act a little upon the offensive, or at least, to take measures of precaution against the subsequent or possible acts of the Queen Regent. Learning that she intended to garrison Stirling, and thereby confine them to the north of the Forth, they hastily advanced to that town, and reduced it to their obedience, *taking order*, as a matter of course, with all the ecclesiastical establishments. They next moved forward to Linlithgow, which they also reformed, and then to Edinburgh. Mary, unable to offer adequate resistance, fled to Dunbar, leaving them to occupy the seat of government. Of course they did not fail to purge the churches of the capital. They also seized the mint, and proceeded to coin a purer species of money than what had lately been in circulation; an act which shows, among many others, that they also contemplated temporal reform.

Hitherto the Reformation had triumphed, as it appeared, purely from the overbearing force of the popular sentiment. With the exception of the Queen and her French attendants, the Catholic clergy, and at most three of the Scottish nobles, there now remained no force in the country to oppose it. So prevalent was the spirit, so entirely did it embrace the popular interests, that the leaders of the Reformation might

* Scone was the place where the Scottish kings had heretofore been crowned.

almost be said to have become the governors of the kingdom. Here, however, it received a temporary check. The Queen Regent knew that in such a case time was not apt to increase the public enthusiasm. She therefore resolved to take no hasty steps. After some weeks had been spent in fruitless negotiation, many of the followers of the confederated Lords found it necessary to go home, in order to attend to private business; others became afraid lest an utter subversion of authority should take place; the leaders themselves became less vigilant than formerly, in proportion as there seemed less danger. On the 22d of July, the Queen Regent, suddenly advancing to Edinburgh with her troops, found them quite unprepared for defence. They were obliged to return to what had been settled by former treaties, namely, to give up the appearance of an army, and wait for the redress of their grievances till the meeting of parliament. Such an arrangement, of course, implied that they should leave the city vacant to the Queen.

At this juncture her Majesty's interests derived some advantage from the death of Henry II. of France, and the consequent accession of Francis II., the husband of the young Queen of Scots. By this change of kings, France naturally fell more than ever under the power of the princes of Guise; because, in addition to their relationship to the Queen, Francis was of so weak an understanding as to offer no obstacle to their ambition, even had it been greater. The whole power therefore of this kingdom was now brought to bear against *the progress* of the new faith in Scotland. A consider-

able armament was immediately prepared in France for the assistance of the Queen Regent.

The reformed Lords beheld this threatened invasion with great alarm; yet they were not utterly downcast. They had, since the last treaty, received into their bond of union no less important an adherent than the Duke of Chastelherault, who, after two vacillations, was now directed by what he conceived to be the interest of his family, to return to the reformed doctrines. They had also sounded the mind of Queen Elizabeth, and found her disposed to assist them against the French interest, which, in the event of a triumph over Scotland, as already explained, threatened her with the loss of her crown, and her country with a change of its religion.

In the course of the ensuing autumn, several thousand troops arrived from France, bringing considerable sums of money, and a vast quantity of ammunition. As the best depot for her forces, Mary fortified the seaport town of Leith, about a mile from Edinburgh. The Lords of the Congregation, having in vain remonstrated against such a manifestation, met in Edinburgh on the 21st of October, and, under the character of a privy council of their King and Queen, solemnly deposed the Regent from her authority. This act, though in a modern monarchical government it would have been called a rebellion, was quite in unison with the practice of the Scottish nobility, even towards their sovereigns, in the event of incapacity or misgovernment. In directing their efforts therefore against the fortifications of Leith, the Lords

could only be considered as endeavouring to expel a foreign power which had planted itself by force in a corner of the kingdom.

A contest such as this, between a nation and one of its towns, even though the latter were garrisoned by four thousand foreign soldiers, could scarcely, under ordinary circumstances, have continued long. In the present case an inequality, greater than can well be believed, arose from the ignorance of gunnery and want of discipline, which prevailed among the Reformers. Two instances had lately occurred in Scottish history, the siege of Tantallan by James V. in 1528, and that of the Castle of St. Andrew's by the Governor Arran in 1546-7, in which the whole power of the existing government was defied by a fortress verging upon the sea. It was now to be seen that one fortified town could hold out against the whole nation, even though that nation was inspired in its attacks by all the fervour of religion.

The Congregational party was established once more in the city of Edinburgh, to carry on the siege of Leith. A small train of artillery being supplied by the inhabitants of Dundee, an attempt was made to plant it as a battery on a convenient spot. The French, however, sallying out, beat off the party and seized the artillery; on which occasion the reformed, being greatly afraid lest the French might cut off their retreat to Edinburgh, thronged in at the Netherbow Port with such clamour and disorder, says John Knox, "as we lust not to express with multiplication of words." On another occasion, the French attempting

to cut off a supply of provisions to the Congregation, and a party marching out to protect it, the latter were driven into Edinburgh under equally disgraceful circumstances. Two such discomfitures were, for a time, decisive of the war ; and the confederated Lords were obliged, with a much diminished force, to fall back upon Stirling.

It being now resolved to call in the assistance of the English, a deputation was sent to Elizabeth for that purpose ; and in the mean time a kind of provisional government was established in two opposite quarters of the kingdom, Glasgow and St. Andrew's, to manage the general affairs. Mary was so far emboldened by her success as to send a party over to Fife for the purpose of dislodging the force at St. Andrew's ; but, just as it was within a short distance of that city, an English fleet, containing the first detachment of Queen Elizabeth's auxiliary troops, sailed into the Firth of Forth, being the first time that an armament from that country had appeared in Scotland with an amicable intention. The French party then returned to Leith with the greatest precipitation, and not without considerable loss. At one part of their retreat, they were obliged to supply a bridge, which had been cut by the Scots, with the roof of a neighbouring church, which they took off entire and laid down across the vacant space.

This happened in January 1560. In April, an army of six thousand men entered the country at Berwick, under the command of Lord Grey, a nobleman who, to render this affair the more remarkable as indicating a change of sentiments in the people, had lost two

generations of his family in the wars carried on by Henry VIII. against the principle of Catholicism in Scotland. The Scots immediately joined forces with this band, thereby bringing into friendly contact many men who had recently fought against each other ; the feeling of a common religion overthrowing at once the inveterate resentment of centuries. After a smart skirmish with the French, they entered together into camp at Hawk-hill, near Leith, and immediately opened up an extensive system of attack upon that town.

Some embarrassments, which it is unnecessary to explain, rendered it difficult for the princes of Guise, at this time, to send such succours to their sister as might have been required to withstand the combined armies. All that the well-known valour of a French soldiery could do in defending the town, and making sallies upon the besiegers, was done ; but every thing was unfavourable to them. An accidental fire destroyed their granaries ; the English fleet prevented the access of supplies by the port ; the assailants also seem to have gained considerable advantage by attacking them in the time of Easter, when religious scruples prevented them from acting in any way except on the defensive. The Queen Regent, falling into ill health from the agitation of her spirits, retired to Edinburgh Castle, and left them in some measure destitute of a leader. All these circumstances together soon brought them to that submission which might have been anticipated from the inequality of their numbers.

On the 10th of June the Queen died, after an interview with the chief Reformers, in which she expressed

her regret for the troubles which she had been so instrumental in raising, and recommended that, for the preservation of the independence of Scotland, both the French and English armies should be sent home. The princes of Guise, now seeing their interests to be desperate in Scotland, gave powers to two diplomatists to form a treaty of peace with two commissioners appointed by Elizabeth; in consequence of which a deed was constructed, as a sort of Scottish Magna Charta, binding Francis and Mary to grant large concessions to their Scottish subjects, and to ratify whatever resolution might be made on the score of religion in parliament. By virtue of this treaty, the English and French retired from Scotland, leaving the government in the hands of a kind of oligarchy formed of the Congregational Lords, who soon after, in parliament, established the Protestant doctrines by solemn statute. The personal reward of Elizabeth for her timely succour was an obligation entered into by the French commissioners that their master and mistress should never thenceforth assume the arms of England. But in reality she had accomplished much more for the advantage of her country, in the assurance she had given it of a continued Protestant ascendancy in Scotland.

Great political results may be observed to have sprung from this grand struggle. It revived and confirmed that old principle in the Scottish constitution, which dictated that, under certain circumstances of incapacity or misgovernment on the part of the sovereign, an assemblage of the leading and more intelligent subjects might assume the direction of the

state. To all intents and purposes this revolution was quite as honourable to the spirit of the nation as that which happened in the British government in 1688. The precedent was never forgot. It operated in the confederation against Mary seven years after, and it was the exact model of the insurrection against Charles I. in 1639. A regret is perhaps allowable, that the triumph in some measure unfitted the Scots for submission to a regular monarchical authority for many years, and by permitting them to effect the Reformation in a violent manner, gave too much latitude to the operation of mean passions. But, upon the whole, it said much for the deep and earnest enthusiasm which has been remarked to be the groundwork of the Scottish character.

CHAPTER XI.

THE REIGN OF QUEEN MARY.

AT the very time when monarchical government experienced this humiliation in Scotland, there was not in the whole world a personage whose fate appeared more glorious than that of its queen. Mary, besides her patrimonial inheritance of Scotland, enjoyed a seat on the throne of France, and was the heir-presumptive of England: it seemed likely that her eldest son should become the sovereign of all the three countries, and thereby be rendered the most powerful prince in Europe. Strange to say, a few brief months saw this splendid prospect grow dim and fade. Francis died in December, 1560, without any offspring; the French crown passed to a younger brother; the supreme power to his ambitious mother, Catherine de Medici; the influence of the Guise princes perished; Mary lost all her interest in France, except what she possessed in the affections of the people: she was left without the least result from her long residence in that country, except the unfortunate one of her Catholic education.

It now seemed proper that she should return to take the management of her own little kingdom, which,

since the death of her mother in June, had been under no regular authority. Such was the general wish of her subjects, who, indeed, rejoiced in her widowhood, since it promised that the monarchy should not be engrossed in that of France. It was also perceived by her uncles that, since France was lost to her, she ought to make the best she could of Scotland, which, rude and revolutionised as it was, might still be used as a good stepping-stone for the acquisition of England. The Catholic party in Scotland, now headed by the great northern chief, the Earl of Huntly, proposed to bring her into the kingdom, and re-establish her throne and the ancient religion in their pristine form; but she wisely preferred to enter by the protection of her Protestant subjects, who had given too recent and too striking a proof of their power, to make the boasts of their opponents worthy of much credit.

It was with feelings of the utmost joy, though not without certain misgivings regarding her personal creed, that reformed Scotland beheld its young queen arrive, August 31, 1561, to re-illumine the halls of Holyrood with the splendors of a court. Mary was now approaching nineteen, and her beauty was of passing lustre. The graces, however, which had charmed the more susceptible French, seem to have been little regarded in Scotland: there is not in any Scottish chronicle or history the slightest allusion to that loveliness, which figures so prominently in every French work regarding her; the only sentiment she seems to have excited in this colder clime, was one of

thankfulness for her having no French offspring, which might have united the two countries into one sovereignty.

Mary, at her first appearance in Scotland, submitted entirely to Protestant counsels. She still cherished her own faith in the recesses of her heart, and even performed her devotions according to the old ritual in her private chapel at the palace: in every other respect, however, she acted as if the Catholic religion did not exist. As if to certify that she did not design it to be ever re-established, she gave away a great quantity of the church lands to her Protestant counsellors and to municipal corporations, devoted much of it to the use of the reformed clergy, and erected out of it various charitable and educational institutions. To her brother Lord James, who was her prime minister, she gave the title and estates of Mar, a very substantial reward for his exertions in favour of the Reformation. A Catholic rebellion, raised by the Earl of Huntly, she caused to be suppressed with much rigour. In short, the government of Queen Mary was conducted in a style eminently popular, and such as should have secured her a better reputation as a ruler among her historians. There is perhaps no instance of a prince in that age governing a people, whose religion was different, with so much moderation.

Had Mary, however, been an angel upon earth, it is evident, from her relation to Elizabeth, and her claims of succession to the English throne, that she could not have been happy. Elizabeth never could forgive Mary's innocent assumption of the arms of

England. In the treaty, by which the Reformation of religion was agreed upon, a clause had been admitted by the weakness of the French commissioners, which bound Francis and Mary never again to wear those arms. Mary, conceiving that this was an attempt to betray her into a renunciation of her claims upon the English crown, could never be induced to sign the treaty, but gave her subjects an act, which equally ensured to them all that was stipulated in it for their interest. This served Elizabeth as a never-failing means of annoying the Scottish queen.

Mary also suffered not a little at the hands of her own subjects. Notwithstanding all her concessions to the spirit of Protestantism, it was still a subject of discontent that she was herself of a different persuasion. More than one attempt was made by the populace to break into her private chapel, even while she was engaged in her devotions, for the purpose of destroying the furniture and killing the priests. The principal preacher, the famous John Knox, launched scurrilous invectives against her from the city pulpit, which he exclusively possessed; and when invited by Mary to a conference, and mildly entreated to be more discreet, he replied in such disrespectful terms, as caused the Queen to burst into tears. By pageants, also, and shows, they were perpetually endeavouring to insult her on this score. Her most innocent recreations, her most profound views of state policy, were alike the subject of rebuke and censure. The truth is, that the people, having as yet only experienced the disadvantage of Catholicism, thought there

could be no good except in what was opposite ; while, unaccustomed for twenty years to submit to the rule of a monarch, they had lost in a great measure the habit of respect for the royal character. It did not occur to them, in the present excited state of their minds, that instances of unnecessary petulance towards a sovereign, are apt just to give sanction to those violent proceedings against public liberty, which it is their object to check.

For four years, however, Mary continued to reign without making the least encroachment upon the rights of her subjects ; nor during that time was the slightest suspicion expressed regarding the purity of her private life. Attracted by her prospect of succeeding to the English crown, many of the most distinguished princes in Europe sought her alliance ; but for a long time she seemed inclined, like her cousin of England, to prefer a life of celibacy. Elizabeth, who was undoubtedly aware that she never should have any direct heir, was exceedingly jealous lest Mary, by marrying and having children, should acquire superior importance in the eyes of her subjects, and either make an attempt to usurp the throne, or at least exercise an undue influence in the kingdom before acceding to it ; she therefore took every means in her power to thwart the matrimonial designs which at length were formed by the Scottish queen.

The person eventually pitched upon by Mary, as most eligible for a husband, was her cousin Henry Stuart, styled Lord Darnley, eldest son of Matthew Earl of Lennox, who was exiled from Scotland during

the regency of Arran, and of Lady Margaret Douglas, the daughter of Margaret of England by the Earl of Angus. This young nobleman was in person extremely prepossessing; his age was rather less than the Queen's; but the grand policy of the match lay in his being the representative of a branch of the English royal family, which, from the terms of Henry the Eighth's will (by which the Scottish line was excluded), might have proved a serious rival to Mary in her pretensions to that crown. The union of the two chief pretenders to her throne, with every prospect of a numerous issue, alarmed Elizabeth in a great degree, and she made many efforts to prevent it. Among other expedients, she imprisoned Darnley's mother in England. All her arts, however, were unavailing. Mary and Darnley were married on the 29th of July, 1565.

An entirely new turn was given by this incident to Mary's life. It is a common belief, that the match was a result of passion on the part of the Queen. The whole affair was, on the contrary, one of the merest matches of policy that could have been formed. It is not likely, from her long widowhood at such an early age, that Mary would have married at all but from the view of strengthening her political position against Elizabeth; certainly, when she had the offer of so many continental princes, she would not have married a man of Darnley's rank and intellect, but for his genealogical advantages. Whether she entertained the least passion for him or not, is doubtful; probably, one of the causes of their subsequent un-

happiness was the very absence of that affection which historians, with strange perversion of feeling, have represented as the grand imprudent point in the match. It is impossible that, in the course of a six-months acquaintance, for so long did the courtship last, Mary should not have observed the inferior character of Darnley; she must have, on the contrary, been aware of it, and nevertheless resolved to encounter its effects, for the sake of accomplishing an important political object.

The match was immediately productive of the utmost uneasiness to Queen Mary. Her brother James, now created Earl of Murray, saw, in Darnley's accession to power, the interruption of his own ambitious course. In conjunction with other lords, and secretly encouraged by Elizabeth, he raised an insurrection against her, within three weeks of her marriage. Mary immediately collected a considerable army among the well-affected part of her subjects, and marched against him in person. It was Murray's pretence on this occasion, that the reformed religion was endangered by the Queen's marriage. So it was, in a remote degree; but the power of Elizabeth, and the private fortunes of Murray, were more immediately placed in peril. Such appears to have been the prevailing belief, for the enterprise found hardly any encouragement among the people. The Queen, at the head of a large army, chased his slender bands from one side of the kingdom to the other, and soon obliged him and his associates to take refuge in England.

Had Darnley, who accompanied her in this military enterprise, been a man of ordinary sense, he might have improved such a complete discomfiture of his enemies into something which would have fixed him permanently at the head of Scottish affairs. Nothing was wanting on the Queen's part to afford him opportunity for doing so; but what will compensate the want of common prudence? Mary, unable to trust weighty affairs to so empty a head, was compelled to employ other ministers.

It was now that the well known David Rizzio came into prominent view. This was a Piedmontese musician, whom Mary had at first engaged as a bass performer in her private band, but afterwards, from a perception of his abilities and faithful character, raised to the condition of her French secretary. It would appear that, after her marriage had deprived her of the services of Murray and other native counsellors, she found it convenient to entrust a great deal of state business to this expert foreigner, who, as may be easily conceived, was apt to be a much more docile minister, to lay abilities out of the question, than either her husband or any of the nobility who had not joined in the late rebellion. The arrangement, however, was unfortunate. It was generally disagreeable to the people to see honour bestowed upon a low-born foreign adventurer of the Catholic religion, while many of the Protestant nobility, the same who had rescued the country from papistical domination a few years ago, were banished. Darnley, who, without the least ability to make use of power, was yet most anxious to acquire

it, conceived mortal offence against an upstart, who, as he thought, stood perpetually between him and his wishes, and enjoyed that confidence of the Queen which he desired to be bestowed upon himself. Those also of the Protestant nobility, who still remained in office, were anxious for the destruction of Rizzio, from a notion that he was the chief means of keeping their friends in banishment. By a strange confluence of circumstances, the death of this obscure Italian became necessary to secure the Protestant ascendancy in Scotland, endangered by the consequences of Murray's rebellion, and to throw open the usual prospects of ambition to a set of rude-spirited nobles.

There was an old custom in Scotland, of which the famous religious covenants were an imitation, to enter into what were called "bands of manrent," by which a body of nobles and gentlemen engaged to each other to follow some common political or local object, in opposition to all who might gainsay it, even against the royal authority itself. Various documents of this kind yet exist in the charter-chests of the Scottish noblemen, signed by the blood of the parties, and invoking all the curses of holy writ, with many more besides, upon the individual who should act unfaithfully. For the purpose of destroying Rizzio, Darnley entered into a bond with those very noblemen whom he had lately assisted in chasing into England. It was stipulated, on his part, that he should exert himself to prevent any forfeiture from being led against them in the ensuing parliament; on theirs, that they should use their utmost power, at whatever risk, to procure

for him the joint sovereignty of the state with Mary, and the right of succeeding to her. To carry their common object into effect, such of the Protestant nobility as were still at court associated themselves with Darnley; among the rest the Earl of Morton, chancellor of the kingdom, and that Lord Ruthven, who had acted so striking a part as provost of Perth under the late Queen Regent. From Darnley's connection with the Douglasses, through his mother, he had the assistance of a great number of that ancient family, which, it may be remarked, had become distinguished for its general adherence to the Reformation.

On the evening of the 9th of March, 1566, Mary, then advanced to the sixth month of pregnancy, was sitting unsuspectingly at supper in a small closet near her bedroom, with Rizzio and two or three other persons by her side, when suddenly her husband and Lord Ruthven entered the apartment. Mary, surprised at the intrusion, enquired what was meant by it; to which Ruthven replied, that all they wished was to take that villain (meaning Rizzio) from her presence. The unfortunate Italian at once saw what was designed, and clung to the garments of his royal mistress, imploring her to save his life, and at the same time making a miserable effort at defence by drawing his dagger. A great number of the conspirators had now entered the adjoining bedchamber, and some were pushing into the little closet, to lend their assistance to Darnley and Ruthven. One of these, Andrew Ker, of Fawdonside, had the audacity

to present a cocked pistol against the Queen's breast, to induce her to shake off Rizzio. Another, George Douglas, a natural son of the Earl of Angus, and therefore uncle to Darnley, bent back the fingers of the unhappy victim, as they clung desperately to the Queen's waist, so as to make him relax his hold. Mary herself afterwards stated, that she felt the chill of several weapons touch her person; and all this when she was in that delicate condition, which is supposed to call for a husband's utmost care and attention. The scene, however, was briefly past. Rizzio, dragged from her presence, in spite of all her efforts to save him, was hurried through her bedroom into the adjoining presence-chamber, at the door of which he was slain by the crowd of meaner conspirators, who there stood guard. His body was afterwards found to have received no fewer than fifty-six wounds, it being demanded by those who despatched him, that every other person should give a stab to the insensible body; so as to involve them as deeply in the consequences of the crime as themselves. The first wound had been given, it is believed, in Mary's presence, by George Douglas, and with Darnley's dagger; which weapon was found next day still sticking in the body. This was to prove to the world, that the deed was committed under sanction of the Queen's husband, if not by his own hand.

The Queen was not made aware till next day that her secretary was actually killed: but her indignation at so violent a scene was nevertheless very great. She taxed her husband with ingratitude for the favours she

had bestowed upon him, and asked what she had done to provoke so dreadful an outrage. He could only answer, in his blunt childish manner, that he suspected Rizzio, besides distracting her personal attention from him, to have counselled her against allowing him that equality in the government which rightfully belonged to him as her husband. To Ruthven, who had returned to her supper-room after the tragedy was over, and solaced his thirst with a cup of wine from her table, she spoke in much sharper terms. "Sir," said she, "my child will avenge this night upon you, if I can get no other person to do it." It is curious, that this exclamation* was in a manner fulfilled by the deaths of the two Earls of Gowry, son and grandson of Ruthven, and by the proscription with which King James saw fit to visit the whole name nearly forty years after.

All this time the palace was beset by the retainers of the conspirators, and Mary was in reality a prisoner. In the want of a body-guard, and completely taken by surprise, she was but a frail woman in the midst of hundreds of armed men. The inhabitants of Edinburgh made a show of appearing in her behalf; but Darnley, whom they had no reason to disbelieve, told them, from a window in the palace, that the Queen was under his protection, and quite at her ease. Two nobles, unengaged in the conspiracy (the Earls of Athol and Bothwell) were in the palace at the time of the assassination; but, wanting their retainers, they

* I have not used the Queen's real words; they were too homely for the taste of the present age.

only formed an addition of two men to her frightened train of serving-women and lacqueys, and were glad to take the first opportunity of making their escape. The Queen might next day be considered as fairly rendered into the hands of her enemies, when the rebel nobles, with Murray at their head, alighted at the gates of Holyrood-house, and Darnley, in terms of their treaty, exercised his first act of independent sovereignty, by issuing a proclamation to prevent the meeting of that parliament, in which his new friends were to have been forfaulted.

The nobles who had formed this compact with Darnley were so well aware of his weak and fickle character, that they had thought it necessary to take many precautions, lest his wife, by some blandishments, should win him back to her interests, and leave them to bear the whole blame of the murder. Even on the day after the incident, when Mary, as might be expected, was confined to her bed with illness, it is amusing to observe the pains they took to prevent a reconciliation, scarcely trusting him a moment in her presence, without a sufficient number of their own body to overlook the interview. It really was not without cause that they distrusted the resolution of their associate. Having permitted him that evening to retire to her chamber, in the hope of prevailing upon her to grant them all a free pardon, she actually did persuade her husband to give up their cause, and take her away from the palace to a place of safety. The Protestant nobles were surprised next day to learn, that instead of being, as they expected, the mi-

nisters of a government under Darnley, they were deserted by him and denounced as rebels by his consort, who was now in East Lothian collecting an army for their destruction.

There was now a complete change of figures at the Scottish court. Murray, and the other rebels of the past year, threw themselves upon Mary's mercy, and were pardoned; while Morton, Ruthven, and other rebels of the last week, retired to England. The only man who remained where he had been was Darnley. A few days had seen the royal fan completely shifted from one set of statesmen to another.

No other incident of note occurred between this period and the confinement of the Queen, which took place in Edinburgh Castle on the 19th of June. Her child, to the great joy of her subjects, and the inconceivable mortification of Queen Elizabeth, was a son.

CHAPTER XII.

REIGN OF MARY CONCLUDED.

UNDER ordinary circumstances, Mary would have now been in a more prosperous and hopeful condition than she had been in before, the object of her marriage being accomplished in the possession of a child, who, from his accumulated rights to the throne of England, might have been expected to give her great influence in that country, besides a more certain power over her own. All, however, was dashed by the incapacity and vicious behaviour of her husband. Her married life was a continued series of unavailing efforts to improve this hopeless character, and make him preserve decent appearances before the public. At the time of her confinement a temporary calm took place, but it soon gave way to renewed uneasiness. When her infant was baptized in December, the wretched father thought it a good way of shewing his spite at the Queen to keep away from the ceremony, so as to affront her before all the foreign friends and ambassadors who had come to attend it.

About this time some of the ambitious nobles who flourished at court, proposed a divorce to her Majesty, as an easy and simple expedient for restoring her peace

of mind ; while it was at the same time a means of removing an odious rival out of their way. The Queen, however, from a principle of delicacy on account of her son, would not consent to the proposal.

About this period the Earl of Bothwell, who has scarcely before been mentioned, came prominently forward at court as a friend of the Queen. This was a young nobleman of bold profligate manners, possessed of great feudal power in Haddingtonshire, and who had, previously to the Queen's marriage, made one or two attempts to supplant Murray in her Majesty's favour, but always without success. Now that the latter nobleman was little trusted by the Queen, Bothwell found the court a better scene for the exercise of his ambition. He seems to have been one of those persons who are not ambitious from talent, or any of the more generous impulses, but merely from an irregular grasping disposition. The Queen had lately found it necessary to admit him and a few other nobles into her councils, as a means of counterbalancing the Murray faction on its return to the country.

It occurred to the mind of this man, that if Darnley could be removed, so as to leave the Queen a free woman, he might at once raise himself to the supreme direction of affairs by marrying her. There were a great many obstacles in the way of this scheme ; among which, not the least was his own marriage some months before to a sister of the Earl of Huntly. That, however, was soon removed ; the Huntly family, who were privy to his designs, consenting to run a divorce against him on the plea of his well-known infidelities.

He consulted Morton, lately an exile in England, and procured that nobleman's consent to become an accessory, on the sole condition that he should produce a deed from Queen Mary sanctioning the transaction; this deed he said he could and would bring, but he never brought it. Maitland, the secretary, and even the Earl of Murray himself, to whom he had latterly been somewhat reconciled, were also made privy to the design, though there is no evidence that they took an active share in its execution. The general feeling of these unprincipled courtiers seems to have been, that it was for their interest in the mean time to permit Bothwell to destroy Darnley, and that they could scarcely fail to fish up advantages to themselves out of the troubled waters which should ensue. It gives a humiliating view of the state of society at this time, to find noblemen, and those too the very persons who had secured the blessings of the Reformation, entering first into a conspiracy for the murder of a humble foreigner, who chanced to thwart their selfish political views, and then consenting to stand by and see one of their associates assassinate their sovereign, who was obnoxious to them only on the same account. The atrocious guilt which Bothwell proposed to himself, we can easily account for, by a consideration of his unenlightened and profligate character; but it is more difficult to comprehend how men of the sagacious sense and liberal politics of Murray and Maitland arrived at the degree of moral obliquity implied by their equally base conduct. One remark upon the times may help a little to solve the enigma. The

loose and weak government of Queen Mary, succeeding, as it did, a regency in which little better than anarchy prevailed, had rendered public men unamenable to every consideration except self-interest. The Queen herself, with her gentle and prudent manners, her liberal conduct in religious matters, and her unflinching exertions for the peace and prosperity of the country, is at this time almost the only figure in the court upon which the eye can now rest with any satisfaction. Strange to say, the only innocent individual was about to become the victim of all the rest.

After the baptism of the young prince in December, Darnley went to visit his father at Glasgow, where he soon after was seized with the small-pox, a disease raging in the city at the time. Though Mary had every reason, except that of external decorum, for disregarding her husband, she nevertheless hastened to Glasgow to see him, and there administered, at the risk of her own life, all the comforts which a husband could expect from a wife under such circumstances. When he was so far convalescent as to permit of his removal to Edinburgh, she caused him to be carried thither in the most careful manner, so that she might at once attend her duties at the seat of government, and watch occasionally over his sick-bed. He was not lodged at the palace, which lies in a low damp situation, but in a house to the south of the city, where the air was purer and more healthful. This mansion stood within the precincts of an ancient collegiate church called the Kirk of Field, the provost of which had lived in it before the Reformation; and the

only houses near it were a few belonging to the same abrogated establishment, which afterwards were used as the College of Edinburgh.

Till the evening of the 9th of February (1567), Mary visited her husband here very frequently, sometimes spending the night in one of the apartments, but more generally reposing at the palace. On that night she had visited him in company with some friends. While the royal party was still in the house, Bothwell, whose plans were all by this time matured, caused a heap of gunpowder to be deposited by his servants in the apartment below that in which Darnley was placed. About midnight, several hours after the Queen and her friends had left the house and gone to Holyrood, fire was set to this combustible material by means of a match, and in an instant the unfortunate young man was blown into the air, along with his body servant, and the house reduced to a heap of ruins. The explosion was so loud as to alarm the whole town, and some of the inhabitants proceeding to the spot, found the bodies of the deceased lying at a little distance without the city wall. The horror with which Mary learned what had taken place, may be learned from a letter she wrote next day to her friends in France, a copy of which has been preserved.

The instruments employed by Bothwell in the murder having been very few, and, it appears, very faithful, the world was at first utterly unable to comprehend how it had taken place, or who were its authors. Mary, equally ignorant, could only offer a reward for the discovery of the murderers, and urge her criminal

officers to make careful enquiry into the circumstances. After the offer of a reward was published, anonymous placards appeared upon the walls of the city, mentioning the Earl of Bothwell as the chief of the guilty individuals, and affirming the Queen herself to have been an accessory, but professing that the writer could make no public appearance as an accuser without assurance against danger. The Earl of Lennox, hearing of such an announcement, wrote to the Queen, urging her to seize Bothwell and subject him to a trial ; which, after some further correspondence, she consented to do, and the 12th of April was appointed as the day when it should take place. There was, in reality, however, no evidence to be found against the murderer, nor, apparently, the least grounds for the suspicion, further than the insinuations of the placards. Lennox, of course, found himself, at the day of trial, completely unprepared for the task of accusation, and was obliged to give up for the present his hopes of obtaining justice. When the 12th of April arrived, Bothwell appeared at the justiciary tribunal with about a thousand armed friends and retainers to overawe the court ; and, as no prosecutor or witness appeared, he was pronounced by the assize to be *not guilty*. He afterwards issued a challenge, proposing to fight any man in single combat who should affirm that he was the murderer of Lord Darnley ; and no one appeared to accept it.

The consequence of all this was, that Bothwell acquired greater power and importance than ever, and took a decidedly leading part at the Scottish court. For ten or twelve days after his trial, he appears to

have retained his whole vassalage around him at Edinburgh, the apparent reason for doing so being his attendance at Parliament, while, in reality, he was contemplating a second grand point in his scheme of villany. On the 21st of the month he either procured or compelled, from a considerable part of the nobility then in town, a bond recommending him to Queen Mary for a husband, and obliging themselves to assist him in obtaining that honour. Armed with this document, and attended by a cohort of willing followers, he seized the person of the Queen, April 24, as she was returning with a small train from Stirling, and forcibly carried her off to his castle of Dunbar.

Mary's misfortunes here took their first real commencement, in the violation of her honour by the murderer of her husband. This expedient, evidently resorted to as a desperate means of procuring her hand, was successful. Mary overpowered by the sense of her horrible situation—half persuaded by the bond which he showed to her that he was an eligible husband in point of political power—unable for the present to escape upon other terms—consented, though with loathing inexpressible, to become his wife.

As Bothwell was still a married man, it was impossible to execute this purpose immediately. In a few days, however, he conducted the Queen under a strong guard to Edinburgh, where a divorce was speedily effected, and every other preparation made for the ill-omened nuptials. On the 15th of May—a month during which the Scottish people consider it unlucky to marry—those nuptials took place.

The course of events now becomes exceedingly rapid. Public sentiment began to raise its tremendous tides, to overwhelm the guilty man by whom it had been insulted. No attempt, popular or otherwise, had been made to rescue Mary from the fangs of her ravisher. Men had stood at gaze upon the astounding fact of the abduction, unable to decide in their own minds whether it was a real act of violence and treason on Bothwell's part, or the result of a collusive scheme. When they now saw Mary profess, in public documents, to pass it over as a rough mode of courtship, and follow it up by a regular marriage—when they recalled, moreover, the strong suspicions under which Bothwell lay of having murdered her late husband—they could no longer restrain their indignation, but, prepared by the grudge which they seem to have all along borne to Mary on account of her Catholicism and French manners, condemned both as equally guilty.

Before he had been many days married, Bothwell began to form intrigues for obtaining possession of the young Prince, who had been placed in the hands of the Earl of Mar at Stirling Castle. Certain noblemen, learning his designs, assembled at Stirling to concert measures for the child's protection, and consider the present aspect of affairs. This association, notwithstanding that it comprised many of the noblemen who had acquitted the Earl at his trial, and afterwards signed the bond recommending him to the Queen, became convinced, seemingly from the appearance of a general design, and that of the most

flagitious nature, which they now began to perceive in his proceedings, that it was necessary to oppose him by force. At their head was Morton, who had returned from his banishment at the time of Darnley's murder, and entered, more or less actively, into Bothwell's designs. It is to be supposed that he and one or two others were only influenced in their pretended zeal for the young Prince, by a prospect of deposing the Queen for her suspected accession to all Bothwell's wickedness, and then proclaiming her child, and becoming themselves a provisional government under him. Murray might have been expected to take a leading hand in such a project ; but he had retired to the Continent soon after Darnley's murder, apparently intending to wait till Bothwell should have filled up the full measure of his crimes, and till Mary should have reached the brink of ruin, so as to step in and profit as he might by the crisis.

It was at the end of May that the association met : on the 7th of June Bothwell learned that, from the influence they had used in the capital, it was become a somewhat unsafe place of residence for him and his bride. He retired to Borthwick Castle, a strong tower in the south of Mid Lothian, where the apartment occupied by him and Mary is still shown. Here, by a sudden march of the associators, who had already drawn together their retainers, the strangely assorted pair were nearly surprised. Escaping almost alone to Dunbar, Bothwell's principal stronghold, they there raised a little army out of his vassals and friends, with

which they immediately returned to face the troops of the insurgents.

The two armies met at Carberry Hill, near Musselburgh, on the 15th of June, and lay for some time on their arms, while various attempts were made by men of moderate feeling to accommodate the existing differences. Late in the evening a convention was agreed upon, by virtue of which Mary gave herself up to the confederated lords, and was conducted by them singly to Edinburgh, Bothwell retiring, at her persuasion, to his own castle, while the army dispersed. As Mary entered the city, she was greeted with many marks of popular malice, which informed her that she was very generally suspected of a participation in her husband's guilt. The lords placed her for the night in the house of the Provost, her palace having been already stripped of much of its furniture by a mob.

It was expressly the agreement of the confederated lords on this occasion, that Mary should continue in possession of the royal authority. Her understanding of the whole affair was, simply, that it was a change of administration, the Confederated Lords coming in place of Bothwell. This, it now appeared, had only been a pretext for inducing her to give up her army. Now that she was in their power, they revived the design of which Rizzio's death was the abortive commencement, and resolved upon putting her into close confinement for life, and proclaiming her son James as King of Scots in her place. The first part of this resolution they immediately carried into effect. On the

night of the 16th, after she had been scarcely a day in their hands, they hurried her, almost unattended, out of her lodgings, and conducted her under a strong guard to Lochleven Castle, a strong baronial tower, situated in the middle of a lake about twenty miles from Edinburgh.

It may be asked at this moment how Mary's subjects came to permit a few noblemen to subvert the government in so sudden and violent a manner. The answer is, that at this time public sentiment, at least in Edinburgh and its neighbourhood, was decidedly against her. She fell a victim to suspicious circumstances, which, in that part of the country, had been no less obvious to the eye than they were offensive to the taste of the public. Her endeavours to give an appearance of decency to the monstrous connection with Bothwell, had been mistaken for a proof of accession to his guilt, there being less improbability in the idea that she could wink at the death of a husband, than there was in the supposition that she could put such a constraint upon her natural feelings as to marry his *suspected* murderer, and the *certain* violator of her own honour. Besides, Mary was a Catholic, and therefore thought capable of any breach of the moral law. In that age, had Virtue herself been of the Pope's religion, she would have been mistaken by the Scottish populace for the opposite emblem, and received all the disrespect properly due to Vice.*

* This is by no means a fanciful assertion. In edicts of that time for the suppression of immorality, the profession of popery is invariably confounded with it.

The grand cause, however, of Mary's dethronement, though not altogether its means, was the inordinate ambition of the reformed nobles, of whom Murray, Morton, and others, were the chief. These personages had been fleshed with a taste of power by their victory over the late Queen-Regent, and, during all the reign of Mary herself, had longed for its further gratification. It is evident, for instance, that Murray could only endure the reign of his sister so long as he continued her prime minister. No sooner had she admitted Darnley to that place, than Murray rebelled. Afterwards, on finding Darnley's weakness, these nobles had conspired to seize and imprison Mary, to make Darnley king in her stead, and then to gain what they wanted by becoming his ministers. At all times their object was the possession of the government. It must be recollected that the murder of Rizzio, of which Darnley, Murray, and Morton, were all alike guilty, was the breaking out of that conspiracy. The assassination of individuals, treason against their sovereign, and the risk of causing a general civil war, were as nothing to these men in prosecuting such an object. We must therefore look upon the seizure of Mary at Carberry Hill, and her subsequent imprisonment in Lochleven Castle, so much in defiance of all compacts and promises, as just the fulfilment of what they had been plotting, ever since the marriage of the Queen and Darnley had displaced them from authority. At the same time, so far as her deposition was the effect of public opinion—unfounded as that sentiment might be in truth—it is to be received by

those who love to see a popular check placed upon sovereign rule, as a gratifying testimony of the advancement of the nation in moral dignity. The influence of public opinion in Mary's fall is very apparent.

The confederates now proceeded to constitute themselves as a Secret Council, and, as such, to assert their authority over the country, though, in reality, they were nothing but a certain number of earls and barons. Their first act of great moment was to force from Mary three deeds, one abdicating the crown, a second transferring it to her child, and a third appointing the Earl of Murray as regent. Armed with these, they crowned the infant at Stirling on the 29th of July, when little more than thirteen months old; and early in August, to complete the design, the Earl of Murray arrived from France to assume the regency.

The subsequent adventures of Bothwell may here be noticed. After retiring from Carberry, an almost solitary fugitive, he had taken refuge for a few days in his castle at Dunbar. Then entering on ship-board, he had gone to the province of Moray, to try what might be done towards the retrieving of his affairs by the assistance of his brother-in-law Huntly, and his uncle the Bishop of Moray. Finding no great encouragement in that quarter, and learning that an armament was fitted out against him by the Confederates, he sailed to Orkney, of which place he had been made duke by Queen Mary before their marriage. Chased hence by the ships sent against him, he wandered into the northern ocean, where he was obliged,

for support, to commit piracy on two merchant vessels belonging to Denmark. On his afterwards debarking in that country, where he thought he might get some countenance as husband to Queen Mary, who was a kinswoman of the king, he was seized as a pirate, and thrown into prison. He was retained there for ten years, at the request of the English and Scottish governments, till at length the solitude and squalor of his dungeon, acting upon a mind which might have "dyed the multitudinous sea incarnadine," produced despair, madness, and death. In a formal declaration, however, which he had emitted before this period, he fully acquitted Queen Mary of any share in his guilt.

CHAPTER XII.

MINORITY OF JAMES VI.

PERHAPS the Scottish people were now fitted, for the only time between the Reformation and the Revolution, with a government entirely to their mind. Catholicism had gone down root and branch with Queen Mary, and the Protestant religion risen to infallible security with Murray, the hero of the Reformation. To add to the joy which such a state of things was calculated to excite, Queen Elizabeth afforded to Murray's government her entire countenance, her only demand in return being, that Murray should consider himself rather a regent for her, than for his nephew King James the Sixth.

Yet there were dissentients to the new arrangements, and those of no inconsiderable importance. In the North, the Earl of Huntly still espoused the interests of Mary and Bothwell; in the South, the Hamiltons were at the head of a numerous list of families who adhered to Mary alone. And, as a few months gave the world time to forget their suspicions of the Queen's guilt, and to reflect on her misfortunes, this party waxed more and more numerous.

Mary spent the whole winter in the islet fortress to

which she had been condemned ; but as spring advanced, she began to have hopes of making her escape, and putting herself at the head of her party. Nothing could equal the fidelity of her gaolers to their charge ; for Sir Robert Douglas was the cousin of Morton, while his wife was the mother of Murray. There was, however, a young relative of the family, one George Douglas,* who, devoting himself to the service of the Queen, and watching an opportunity of stealing the keys of the Castle, at length succeeded on the 2nd of May, in allowing her to escape. She was immediately conducted to Hamilton, and placed in the midst of her partizans. At the same time, intelligence being dispatched to Huntly, that nobleman lost no time in moving down from the Highlands with an immense band to her aid. The Regent, who chanced to be at Glasgow, was completely taken by surprise ; yet, by great exertions, he succeeded in a few days in raising a considerable force, with which he resolved to face the enemy.

The two parties met, on the 11th of May, at Langside, near Glasgow ; and it was Mary's fortune to lose the day. In a state of distress beyond all conception, she quitted the field where she had seen hundreds of her best and dearest friends perish for her sake, and, flying along the most desert parts of Ayrshire and Galloway, never slackened bridle till she reached the lonely abbey of Dundrennan, on the coast of the Solway Firth, where no choice remained for her but

* An old chronicler informs us that he had the nick-name of "Pretty Geordie."

either to remain and be taken by her rebellious subjects, or to sail across to England and ask protection from Queen Elizabeth. Unfortunately she selected the latter alternative, and was soon within the grasp of that "sister and foe"* who had for so many years sought her destruction. Mary calculated, in her terror for her own subjects, that Elizabeth could not be worse ; but, like a bird which seeks refuge from some ruthless creature of its own kind in the bosom of its more ordinary enemy—man, and is there seized and wrung to death, she soon found that the protector she sought was more cruel than the open enemy from whom she fled. Elizabeth, though with many coquettish hesitations and excuses—the sport of the cat with the mouse—and though there was no law or custom in the world to sanction such a proceeding, condemned Mary to strict imprisonment. Indeed, the possession of Mary's person was exactly what Elizabeth had been anxious for : with that advantage, she could maintain her vice-regal government in Scotland, so long as it acted conformably to her will ; and destroy it, by letting the prisoner loose, whenever it should become restive. It was upon such base principles that rulers acted in that age ; and every man must be sorry to think that the fashion is not yet extinct. Honourable feeling still asks what time must yet elapse ere the diplomatic transactions of nations shall be conducted upon the same just and candid principles which guide the behaviour of men of education acting as individuals ?

A most extraordinary scene now took place. Eli-

* Burn^g.

zabeth, resolved to degrade Mary by all possible means, called up a deputation of the Scots to England, to prefer a public accusation against her as the murderer of her husband; and the Scottish queen, though at first she refused to submit to the indignity of being tried, as it were, before an equal, at length was induced to appoint commissioners to meet those from Scotland, and answer to the calumnious charges. This strange convention took place at York, November, 1568. The accusers, at the head of whom was Murray, could offer no proof of their allegations, except the copies of a few letters which they alleged to have been sent by Mary to Bothwell, and which contained expressions of amatory passion towards him, of date antecedent to the death of her husband. As these documents proved nothing but the groundlessness of their accusations, Elizabeth was obliged to confess that there was no evidence against her cousin, though she still retained her in confinement.*

* Having been unable to enter at any length into the controverted parts of Mary's history, I may refer my readers for a more minute narrative to Mr. H. G. Bell's *Life of this unfortunate Princess*, which I do not hesitate, after a collation of the authorities, to pronounce the *only* candid account of the Queen I have ever read.

I have been much surprised, after Mr. Bell's able and most distinct exposition of all the circumstances under suspicion, to find Sir Walter Scott repeat some of the exploded heresies in his late *History of Scotland*, having apparently never perused the above work. It is hardly tolerable to find intelligent writers, at the distance of three hundred years, adopting the slanders of such men as Knox and Buchanan, whether from imperfect inquiries, or from a mere want of sufficient courage to contravene what has been so long generally believed.

When Murray returned from this excursion, he found the nation on the point of breaking out into a civil war. Mary's friends had now recovered from the blow they had received at Langside, and were disposed to take up arms once more in her behalf. In concert with them was the Duke of Norfolk in England, who had formed a scheme of marrying her, and then placing her at the head of a Catholic rebellion against Elizabeth. Just as Murray was concerting measures with the English queen for meeting this conspiracy, he was assassinated at Linlithgow, January 23, 1570, by David Hamilton of Bothwellhaugh, a gentleman of the Queen's faction, who conceived himself to have private as well as public wrongs to be avenged in this unjustifiable way.

The story of this Hamilton is one of the most characteristic that occurs in the Scottish annals, and is well worthy of being detailed. In company with all the rest of his clan, he had appeared in behalf of Mary at Langside, where he was taken prisoner. Being then condemned to death as a traitor to the new government, he was pardoned at the command of Murray, who, nevertheless, confiscated his estates, and gave them to some of his own adherents. The person on whom the Regent conferred that of Woodhouselee was so precipitate in his measures for procuring possession, as to turn out Hamilton's wife into the fields, notwithstanding that the snow was lying deep on the ground, and the lady had just recovered from child-bearing.* The consequence was,

* This injury was perhaps felt the more deeply, in as far as the estate of Woodhouselee had been the property of the

that she became furiously mad. A wrong of this nature to a proud Scottish gentleman was such as only blood could avenge. Hamilton therefore became the tool of his clan, in a scheme for destroying their grand public enemy.

The plan concerted was, that Bothwellhaugh (for so he was commonly called from his paternal estate) should plant himself in a house belonging to his kinsman, the Archbishop of Hamilton, at Linlithgow, and there awaiting the Regent, as he should pass through the town on a journey from Stirling to Edinburgh, shoot him with a harquebuss from one of the windows. It may convey some notion of the spirit of the times, that this high prelate should have willingly lent himself and his house to such a purpose. Every thing fell out exactly as had been anticipated. Murray was informed on the fatal morning that some such design was entertained against him; but he judged it inexpedient to show fear, and entertained hopes of evading the shot by riding quickly through the town. Unfortunately for him, the street became filled with people, who retarded his motions; insomuch that when he arrived at the spot where Bothwellhaugh was planted, a part of the street narrower than the rest, he was, in a manner, fixed up as a fair mark for the shot about to be aimed at him. Bothwellhaugh, who had previously stationed himself in a gallery running along the second story of the house, and which was hung with curtains on purpose to conceal him, fired his

lady in her own right, by virtue of descent from a long line of respectable ancestors.

harquebuss with such sure effect, that the bullet, after piercing the Regent through the lower part of the body, struck and killed the horse of a gentleman riding at his farther side. The unfortunate man fell into the arms of his attendants. Attention being immediately directed to the house from which the blow had proceeded, it was at once recognised as that of the Archbishop of St. Andrews, and no one doubted upon what account it had been struck. A cry was raised for revenge, and hundreds, finding the door barricadoed, attempted to break through the neighbouring lanes, in order to get into the house behind. To their surprise, all those channels of access had been carefully stuffed up with furze and thorns, so as to render it impossible for them to approach the house for several minutes. In the mean time Bothwellhaugh had mounted a swift horse, which he kept ready saddled and bridled at the back door, and ridden off at full speed towards Clydesdale, the territory of his friends. He had even taken the precaution to remove the architrave of a garden door behind, so as to admit of his horse passing through. A number of the Regent's friends followed him as hard as they could, and at one place had nearly overtaken him; but he saved himself by the desperate expedient of stabbing his horse with his dagger, which caused the animal, previously exhausted, to leap a broad ditch or morass, whereby he was placed beyond the reach of his pursuers.

It is related of this assassin that, finding it afterwards necessary, in the general proscription of his family,

to go to France, he was there requested by the Catholic party to become the murderer of Admiral Coligny, who was afterwards sacrificed at the Bartholomew massacre. But Bothwellhaugh was no common dealer in blood: in the death of Murray he had only vindicated what were then considered in his country the most sacred principles—attachment to clan interest, and revenge for personal injury. It is even added, that he challenged the individual who proposed this new murder to him, as one who had, by so doing, placed him in the light of a mere bravo. The harquebuss with which he shot the Regent appears to have been preserved by his family as a sacred relic; for it is still in existence at the palace of the Duke of Hamilton.

Murray having died on the same night that he was wounded, his party assembled immediately after, and, while they decreed the most honourable obsequies to the deceased, chose a new Regent in the person of the Earl of Lennox; a nobleman of weak character, but respectable as the grandfather of the young King, while, in political and religious principles, he was all that could be desired. Under him the civil war broke out with great fury, notwithstanding that Elizabeth continued her protection to the Protestant interest in Scotland, and even sent three small flying armies into the country to lay waste the lands of Queen Mary's friends, and revenge the death of Murray. It affords a certain evidence in favour of Mary, that two of her former enemies, Kirkcaldy of Grange, and Maitland of Lethington, one of them the best soldier, the other

the acutest statesman of the age, now came over to her side. They had their head-quarters at Edinburgh, while the Regent established himself at Stirling.

A most cruel and destructive species of warfare now commenced between the two national factions, who, under the titles of *King's men* and *Queen's men*, respectively adhered to the councils established in the above cities. This war chiefly took the form of sallies, or forays, upon the lands of the opposing parties, and was, upon the whole, kindred to the spirit and habits of the nation. The old system of holding parliaments and driving through party measures, was also resorted to. The Queen's friends held one in the regular place at Edinburgh, while the Regent assembled another in the Parliament Hall of James III. at Stirling; nay, at one particular crisis, one was held within the walls of the city, while another met in the suburb called the Canongate, where the *King's men* were for the time carrying on their military operations. Attainders were then discharged by each against the other, almost as regularly as the mutual firing of ordnance, which was going on in their respective neighbourhoods. An old historian, describing the military habits which all men contracted under such circumstances, says, that "jacks, knapsacks,* plait-sleeves, and pistols, now were as ordinary apparel to the most part, as heretofore were doublets and breeches." Even children on the streets would fight with long knives, for words to which they were incapable of applying ideas. One circumstance

* Helmets,

happened to give an additional shade of ferocity to the contest. The King's faction, having the good fortune to surprise Dumbarton Castle, took prisoner that Archbishop of St. Andrew's who had been so unhappily distinguished in the assassination of Murray, and, though no specific crime could be attached to him, he was, without trial or ceremony of any kind, hanged at Stirling. A system then came into practice by which each party executed its prisoners instantaneously, as traitors. The gallows literally became a proper accompaniment of every military enterprise; and no character or order of men was respected.

Lennox himself at length fell a victim to this horrid system. Being surprised in a state of security at Stirling, September 1571, he and many of his best friends were seized in their houses, and brought out and mounted behind the troopers of the enemy. Every preparation was made by the assailants for at once putting an end to the war, by cropping, as it were, the very flower of the King's party, when they were counter-surprised by a sally from Stirling Castle, and obliged to decamp with their enterprise only half accomplished. As they galloped out of the town in a disorderly condition, the captives scarcely certain whether to consider themselves in that light or as captors, a man of the name of Calder shot the Regent in cold blood, as one last desperate blow at his party. He died on the same night.

The Earl of Mar was now chosen Regent, a nobleman much respected, not only by his own party, but by the opposite faction also, on account of his great

prudence and moderation, though certainly not qualified, any more than Lennox, to restore peace to his bleeding country. The contest slackened but very little during the brief government of Mar : quite broken-hearted, at length, with national miseries which he saw he could not prevent, this good man died, October 1572, and was succeeded by the Earl of Morton.

It was now for the first time since the death of Murray, that the reins of government were held by a firm hand. Morton, with all the vices and faults which can make a man loathsome to his fellow-creatures, possessed exactly that kind of sagacity and force of character which was fitted to manage a country under such peculiar circumstances. He, in the first place, succeeded in recommending himself to Elizabeth, as one who was inclined to govern Scotland with a regard to her interests. He then exerted himself to dis sever the two main component parts of the opposing faction, which bore the names of the Castle and Country party, from one being in possession of Edinburgh Castle, and the other roaming at large through the provinces. Kirkaldy of Grange, chief of the former, to whom he first made overtures, refused, like an honourable soldier, to listen to any proposal of capitulation which did not embrace all his friends ; but the Hamiltons, and other members of the Country party, expressed no such scruples in favour of their associates in the Castle. No sooner had he procured their submission than he proceeded to besiege the Castle, which, with the assistance of a party of English, he took in thirty-four days. He immedi-

ately hanged Kirkaldy of Grange, a man whose military prowess had been such as to cause the people to look upon him as "another Wallace;" and it is believed that Maitland of Lethington only escaped the same fate by taking poison. After this triumph, Morton enriched his exchequer with an immense harvest of fines and forfeitures, from which the country party were not exempted; and henceforth the partizans of Queen Mary are no more found in a collective capacity in our annals.

It is a circumstance here worthy of remark, that of all the personages who figured in Scottish history at the commencement of the troubles with the marriage of Mary and Darnley, seven years before, Morton was the only individual who had not come to some miserable fate. Mary herself was now undergoing an imprisonment destined to be perpetual; Darnley, Rizzio, Murray, and Lennox, were murdered; Maitland of Lethington had killed himself in despair; the Earl of Mar died of a broken heart; Kirkaldy of Grange and the Archbishop of St. Andrew's, were publicly executed by their respective enemies; Bothwell was pining or raving in a solitary dungeon in a foreign land; the Hamilton family, formerly the most powerful in Scotland, was ruined and exiled; of the whole only Morton existed, a colossal villain towering above the ruins of the rest, like a pillar which has been planted on the place once occupied by a flourishing city, to relate the tale of crime for which it was destroyed. Morton also, though spared for the present, was himself in proper time to be subjected to a violent death, as if Providence had seen fit to avenge, by the

common destruction of innocent and guilty, one of the most shameful conspiracies which disgraces the history of the race.

This most flagitious noble continued much longer in power than any of the three former Regents. He filled his exalted station for about five years, partly upheld by the secret aid of Elizabeth, and partly supported by the Protestant part of his subjects, who, though groaning under his tyranny and avarice, submitted gladly to every temporal inconvenience, for the sake of ensuring the spiritual advantages they prized so much. Peace was maintained without interruption during the whole of this period.

In the mean time the young King was pressing onwards to manhood, under the watchful care of Annapel, the widow of the late Earl of Mar, who superintended all his personal comforts, while George Buchanan, the celebrated scholar, managed his education. Already the nation was cheered with good reports regarding the faculties of their future monarch. It was said that, though unfortunately weak in body and somewhat deformed, he displayed a capacity for learning and an acuteness of intellect calculated to raise the highest hopes regarding his abilities for government.

It is seldom that a minor king wants some one to persuade him that he is fit to sway the sceptre long before the period stipulated by law and custom. James was hardly twelve when he permitted himself to become the head of a conspiracy for wresting the supreme power out of Morton's hands. The chief agents in

this attempt were two young men, Esme and James Stuart, who had been admitted to him as companions; but the power was supplied by two nobles of high influence, the Earls of Atholl and Argyle, who entertained legitimate cause of wrath against Morton. The plot, from its being skilfully and cautiously executed, was attended with success, at least for a time. Morton was obliged to resign; and James assumed the government, March 1578, under the administration of Atholl and Argyll.

Morton, after this period, continued in greater or less power at the Scottish court till 1581, when it was at length found practicable, by James and his friends, to bring him to his fate. The ex-Regent had, in his time of power, procured from the King a pardon for all political offences which it could be supposed he had ever committed; but in this deed of remission was not included his foreknowledge or accession to the murder of Lord Darnley. He was therefore accused by James Stuart, the King's favourite, of that crime. After trial, June 1, 1581, he was condemned to suffer death. Next day his head was cut off by an instrument similar to the modern guillotine,* which he had introduced into the country while Regent, and which had never been used for any other criminal before.

This might be considered as rather a wonderful

* This implement, which was afterwards employed to shed much noble blood during the great civil war, was styled the Maiden: it is preserved in the Museum of the Society of Antiquaries at Edinburgh.

symptom of energy in the government of the young sovereign ; for Morton was the guardian of the interests of Elizabeth in Scotland, had been the protector of the Protestant religion, and was possessed of much power as the acting chief of the house of Douglas. The truth is, he had rendered himself generally odious by personal vices, even to the clergy whom he patronised, while he was looked upon by the people as a monster who had become overgrown with their spoils. Elizabeth did think it necessary to make a show of hostility on the border, but without transgressing that line. So perished the last of the conspirators against Queen Mary.

An exertion of power such as this, was calculated to bring much additional strength to James's government ; it cleared the field, as it were, for a new set of friends, a new generation of politicians. To use somewhat homely phraseology, it was an immense addition to the slender capital of power with which he commenced his profession as a king, and, if well managed, might have brought him great returns. Unfortunately, his Majesty had not made a very fortunate selection of counsellors.

The chief of these were the same young men who had assisted in procuring the downfall of Morton. Esme Stuart, a cousin of his father Darnley, and James Stuart, a second son of Lord Ochiltree, and also claiming kindred to royalty through his ancestor the first Duke of Albany. The former, according to every respectable authority, was a most amiable person, unfitted for his situation by nothing but his being

of the Catholic religion; the other was a man of bolder character, but less personal worth. By attaching himself to these companions, James procured to himself the serious disapprobation of all the Protestant, and all the virtuous part of his subjects. Yet it was perhaps necessary, under the extraordinary circumstances which attended his coming to the supreme power, that he should have employed some such unscrupling and determined friends, to obtain for him a degree of authority sufficient for the management of the state. Without James Stuart, it is evident that his own timid and gentle character would never have enabled him to rescue his sceptre from Morton.

It was soon seen by the Protestant and liberal part of the nobles, that a government conducted chiefly by the two Stuarts was dangerous, as tending at once to despotism and the Catholic system of religion. A conspiracy was therefore formed, with the secret aid of Elizabeth, for getting the young King into other hands. He was arrested on a hunting progress, August, 1582, and kept in confinement at Ruthven Castle. The two favourites were at the same time separately confined, and kept at a distance; and for a while, as clergy and people generally approved of the deed, James remained an honourable prisoner, while his gaolers administered his affairs in his own name. As soon as he was secured, the Queen of England sent a hypocritical message of condolence, bewailing the very injury which she assisted in inflicting. Mary also heard in the retirement of her prison how her son was treated, and, knowing well the sor-

rows of a captive, sent a letter, in which she most sincerely lamented his fate.

James was himself of so easy a disposition, that it is probable he might have soon been induced to withdraw his affections from his two former advisers, and place them upon the nobles who now kept him in restraint, if the latter had only taken equal pains to cultivate his personal tastes. To have procured James's esteem, it was only necessary to join in his sports, and avoid troubling him with too much business. This does not appear to have been done by the Ruthven conspirators; they had high ideas of his duties, and were inclined to make little allowance for his likes or dislikes. Much against his wishes, they banished his cousin, Esme Stuart, whom he had created Duke of Lennox, to France, where he soon after died. It was not to be thought that the young King should fall readily into the state maxims or habits inculcated by such masters: he took the first opportunity of escaping from their hands, and threw himself once more into the arms of James Stuart.

This favourite, previously created Earl of Arran, now resumed his former authority, in perhaps greater plenitude than ever, and was able, with little difficulty, to suppress an attempt of the Ruthven conspirators to stand their ground against him. With the exception of the Earl of Gowrie, whom he seized and executed, they all fled in dismay to England, accompanied by a number of the Protestant clergy. These events happened in 1583.

In 1584, when eighteen years of age, James pub-

lished his first literary effort, entitled, "The Essayes of a Prentise in the Divine Art of Poesie, with the rewles and cautellis of the same;" a work consisting, as its title implies, of a certain number of his juvenile efforts in poetry, and the rules and cautions which are to be observed in that art. Artificial as they are in structure, the poems do no discredit to the genius of his family. One of them is a lament, in very touching language, for the hard fate of his friend, the Duke of Lennox.

The truth is, James was far better fitted to be a student than a king; and one of his chief inducements for liking the administration of Arran, must have been simply the literary leisure which that personage allowed him to enjoy, as the price of his delegated power.

At the very time his Majesty was engaged in the innocent employment of publishing his boyish verses, Arran was preparing a measure of the most desperate nature—no less than to make the king almost independent of all the other influences in the state, to repress the power of the clergy over the people, and attain all the nobles who had lately distinguished themselves at what was called the Raid of Ruthven. Whatever was the personal character of the minister, it certainly says a great deal for his energy, and also proves a considerable degree of popularity, that he should have been able to carry through such a measure, at a time when the Scottish monarchy, never absolute nor powerful, was just reviving from a minority, during which it could scarcely be said to have

existed. And not only did he carry through the measure, but he had the strength to act upon it for upwards of a twelvemonth, the liberal party being all the time exiled in England. During this period Elizabeth enjoyed no influence over Scotland; on the contrary, a plan was agitated by Arran for associating Mary with James in the government, than which nothing could have been more adverse to the interests of the English Queen, as it would have given the Catholics a great advantage against her.

The attention of Elizabeth was soon awakened to the transactions of Scotland, and she dispatched her secretary, Sir Francis Walsingham, to try what might be done towards the re-establishment of her influence in that quarter. The English minister, on being introduced to James, was surprised to find, in a prince of nineteen, a power of conversation such as he might have admired even in an aged statesman. To every argument he could present on political subjects, James was ready to make a plausible reply. In fact, on this occasion the Scottish monarch turned out one of his fairest sides to observation, a knack of conducting a speculative conversation with great apparent ability, while he was all the time as unfitted to carry his maxims into practice with consistent firmness and dignity, as he was able to defend them in speech. Walsingham did not eventually succeed in his embassy, but soon after returned to England, apparently convinced, from the power of James's arguments, that it was in vain to make the attempt. Elizabeth was more successful with a less dignified envoy, of the name of

Wotton, whom she sent to Scotland after Walsingham's return. This person contrived, by entering into all James's sports, and flattering his tastes, to attain an object in which the mere straightforward wisdom of his predecessor had failed. By his means a good understanding was established to a certain extent with Arran himself, at least enough to lull that minister into security, while her Majesty concerted measures with the exiled nobles to procure his utter downfall, and the restoration of what might now be termed a *constitutional* ministry.

The ruin of this proud favourite was in the end much accelerated by an unlucky circumstance in his personal history. He was so unfortunate as to conceive a violent passion for the Countess of March, who, notwithstanding that her husband was still alive, did not hesitate to return his affection; and, finally, by a scandalous breach of the rules of society, and every sacred law, the guilty pair accomplished a marriage. Such a proceeding in an age when, at least, moral conduct was generally studied, perhaps did more injury to Arran's character than might have been inflicted by treason, rapine, and murder combined.

An incident one day occurred, which might almost be likened to the warning given to Cæsar before the ides of March. As the upstart earl one day entered the court of justice which it was his custom to control, he happened to brush rudely past an aged man, of rather mean appearance, who stood in his way. That person immediately confronted him, and said,

"Look at me, my lord—I am Oliver Sinclair!" It was the worn-out and indigent favourite of James V. who thus addressed the glittering minion of his grandson. Had a spectre risen from the grave to admonish the Earl of Arran of the mutability of fortune, it could scarcely have given the lesson with more striking effect.

Towards the conclusion of the year 1585, a plot for Arran's destruction was fully matured by Elizabeth and the exiled nobles, in concert with two or three Scottish courtiers, who had hitherto seemed to be in his lordship's interest, but were in reality his rivals. Assisted with money from the English queen, the exiles appeared on the frontier, collected their vassalage from their respective estates, and, joined by a border chief,* who had been recently offended by Arran, advanced against the favourite; who, at the first intelligence, had thrown himself, with the King and court, into Stirling, which he attempted to defend. When the insurgents reached this town, they found themselves ten thousand strong, a force much greater than Arran was able to command at so short a warning; he therefore was obliged to give up all hope of retaining his place for the mean time, and seek safety in flight. Leaving the King in the castle, he abandoned the town to the assailants, locked the gates of Stirling bridge behind him, and, without a single attendant out of all who had lately done him homage, wandered into the northern parts of the king-

* Lord Maxwell.

dom. The Protestant nobles then procured admission to the King, and established themselves around him as a new ministry and council.

The ultimate fate of Arran formed a proper winding up to a life spent in such desperate political schemes. After ten years of hopeless obscurity, he thought he perceived a chance of regaining his lost offices, and suddenly re-appeared before King James at Holyroodhouse. The monarch was then wiser than he had been, and engaged, moreover, in such relations as rendered it impossible for him to afford any countenance to his old favourite. He recommended his lordship to retire, at least for the mean time, to his former haunts. The ex-minister complied, and was proceeding through the mountains between Clydesdale and Ayrshire, when some one warned him to beware of Douglas of Torthorwald, who had vowed to avenge upon him the death of his relation, the Earl of Morton. Arran gave a contemptuous answer to this admonition; which being reported to Douglas, then not far off, the ferocious baron immediately gave chase, and soon overtook the object of his wrath. The ill-starred favourite was immediately tumbled from his horse, and put to death. His head, then cut from his body, was mounted on a spear, and fixed on the walls of Torthorwald castle. Nor, though the deed was thus openly vaunted of, did judicial authority ever attempt to visit it with any notice: it was one of those crimes with which a whole nation sympathises, and which national justice therefore fails to *avenge*. A nephew of the deceased afterwards gra-

tified his own desire of vengeance by stabbing the Laird of Torthorwald in the high street of Edinburgh; but was himself, at a subsequent period, killed in the same way, and on the same principle, by a kinsman of Douglas: so many stages were there sometimes in a Scottish feud.

CHAPTER XII.

REIGN OF JAMES VI.

It was a matter of course, after Arran had been supplanted by a set of moderate and Protestant nobles, that the policy of the Scottish government should endure a radical change. The royal power, both as regarded civil and religious matters, was now reduced to its former limits; the interests of Elizabeth were carefully attended to; and much encouragement was given to a party in the church, which advocated the republican system of ecclesiastical government, styled Presbytery. To James personally the change was of little moment: he had only been relieved from the thralldom of one man, to submit to that imposed by a considerable number.

It was while Scotland stood in this particular situation, that its expatriated and most unhappy Queen was destined to close an imprisonment of nineteen years by a violent death.

The reader has been already made aware of the remote causes of this catastrophe, namely, the pretensions which Mary herself made, or which a party made in her behalf, to the throne of Elizabeth. To

inform him of the more immediate causes, it is necessary to relate that, at this time, the most fearful apprehensions were entertained in England lest the Catholic powers of the Continent should succeed in a design which they entertained, of overturning the Protestant religion, and substituting a Popish sovereign upon the throne. Every now and then accounts reached the country of a prodigious armament which Spain (then a powerful state) was fitting out for the purpose of invading England, and replacing the faith of Rome. Almost as frequently plots were detected among small parties of native Catholics, who, with the fanaticism of the age, had devoted themselves to the project of assassinating Elizabeth, and establishing Mary as her successor. The people, indeed, began to look upon the Scottish queen as a person whose life was inconsistent with the general safety. It is true, she was only a pining and solitary captive, and but the object, not the instigator, of any of these conspiracies. It was also abundantly evident to the eye of justice, that, being a foreign and independent princess, living in England against her will, she could not be held amenable to English law, even if she did take measures for procuring her liberty, or otherwise advancing her interests. Such considerations, however, were allowed no place in the national mind at that hurried and enthusiastic time. Her life was universally demanded as a sacrifice necessary to the peace of the nation; and strange as it may seem, it is far more easy for a nation, than for any individual, to reconcile itself to the performance of an act of violent

injustice. The wicked feeling then assumes the specious form of patriotism.

While England was thus threatened by the Catholics, it was impossible for Scotland to stand unconcerned. The people of that country, after twenty-six years experience of the Reformation, were, in reality, more zealously adverse to the Church of Rome than their southern neighbours. Knowing that, as their religion had been established at first through Elizabeth's assistance, so had it all along been maintained by the same means; they could not but see, in the prospect of a subversion of Protestantism in England, a certainty of the same fate overtaking it in their own country. They therefore participated, to a great degree, in the same views as to Queen Mary's existence.

Under the influence of their common fears, the governments of the two countries entered (June, 1586) into a treaty of mutual assistance, by virtue of which the Scottish king bound himself to co-operate even against his mother in the event of any conspiracy being set on foot in her behalf; while the Queen of England, as a guerdon to assure the alliance of the Scots, granted him, on the other hand, a pension of five thousand pounds a-year. It is hardly necessary to explain, that King James only appeared nominally in this league, his Protestant administration being the real agents. His personal influence was too slight to be of any avail in favour of his mother, with whatever indignation he might behold the injuries heaped upon her.

The expedient adopted by the English government for putting something like a show of order and law

upon Mary's destruction, was to charge her with being accessory to one of those Catholic conspiracies which have just been mentioned. A young Englishman, named Anthony Babington, joined with a few more enthusiasts of the same description in a scheme for assassinating Elizabeth, and liberating Queen Mary. It is possible that he wrote letters to the captive queen, requesting her co-operation in the design; by her own account, she received many such effusions, to which she never made any reply. It is clear, however, that there was no evidence to prove her having ever expressed assent in any way to the scheme, besides some pretended confessions which were brought forward *after* the criminals were executed, as having been made by them in prison.

The unfortunate Queen was tried, October 14, 1583, at Fotheringay Castle, but under a protest on her part, that she only submitted to such a process from a wish to clear her honour by examination. The solemn mockery was conducted by forty of the chief men in England, who acted under a commission from Queen Elizabeth. Throughout the whole scene, Mary preserved astonishing presence of mind, replying to every charge and every insinuation made against her with the most pointed argument, and a consistency which bespoke her innocence. By a flagrant breach of that very law upon which it was pretended to arraign her, no witnesses were brought forward in person. The evidence consisted solely of papers, which were called confessions of dead or arrested criminals, but which may be clearly held as forged for the

purpose, in the absence of every other device. And thus Queen Mary was condemned as guilty of treason against the Queen of England, a crime which she never did, and, properly speaking, never could commit.

Nearly four months elapsed before Elizabeth found it perfectly convenient to proceed upon this sentence. During that space the King of Scotland made warm remonstrances, by means of ambassadors at the English court, against so monstrous a violation of his feelings, and so shocking a disgrace to the royal title, as seemed to be contemplated. But Elizabeth knew very well how completely incapable he was of taking any measure of revenge against her; and to the entreaties of the King of France, who also thought proper to petition in favour of his brother's widow, she turned an equally deaf ear.

Only one consideration could induce this strong-minded woman to pause ere ordering the execution. She felt anxious to make it appear that she herself had no personal motives for the sacrifice, but that it was entirely made for the sake and at the pressing demand of her people. For this purpose, by a multitude of mean arts, she contrived to inflame the popular rage against the Catholics, and against Mary, till at last she seemed in a manner obliged to gratify the nation by giving way to its wishes. Even then she thought it necessary to take some precautions for the safety of her good name. Although forced, as she made it appear, to sign the sentence, she professed to place it in the hands of her council, only to be

employed by them, at their discretion, in the event of a Spanish invasion or Catholic insurrection. It is also known by incontestible evidence that she used many artifices to induce some one to rid her of the Scottish Queen by means of poison, in which case it might have appeared that a natural death had anticipated the sentence. Such was then the moral feeling of even the most splendid characters in history.

The behaviour of Mary under these circumstances, was in striking contrast to that of her cruel kinswoman. The unhappy Queen had long lost all those personal charms which are so apt to bring levity to their possessors: her extraordinary misfortunes, confinement, and its attendant bad health, together with the influence of her religion, had reduced her mind to a degree of soberness and gravity very different from what it displayed in the days when life was young and hope in its prime. She now regarded death rather as a blessing than an evil, for it promised her a passage from a labyrinth of miseries, which she never could otherwise hope to leave behind her. Thus, while Elizabeth cherished towards her those malignant feelings which a wolf may be supposed to entertain towards the prey he is about to rend asunder, Mary prayed with sincerity and fervour for the happiness of her destroyer, and even after having given up all hope of life, was able to write to her in a strain of almost sisterly affection. One of the last requests which Queen Mary presented to Queen Elizabeth was, that she might not be cut off by a secret death, but be permitted to die deliberately, with the consolations of religion, and in

presence of her attendants. Her whole conduct may be regarded as a singular instance of the effect which misfortune and religion are calculated to have in a combined form, in preparing the mind for death.

It was not till February, 1586-7, that the English Queen at length determined upon striking this long-impending blow. It was then at last struck in such a manner as to leave her the possibility of an equivocation, which might save her character. She contrived to make Davison, the Secretary, understand her wishes to be that the warrant should be acted upon, but without plainly giving orders to that effect. To his own misfortune he proceeded on this interpretation of her will, and laid the warrant before the privy council, by whom it was immediately sent off to the sheriff of the county in which Mary was confined, who, with the Earls of Kent and Shrewsbury, was empowered to see it put into execution. These nobles arrived at Fotheringay Castle, Mary's present prison, on the evening of the 7th of February, and informed her that she must prepare for the block on the ensuing morning.

What follows regarding the unfortunate Queen's last moments is from Lingard's history of England, a work with which the youthful reader may acquaint himself with great advantage at a future period of life.

Mary divided this last important night in her life into three parts. The arrangement of her domestic affairs, the writing of her will, and of three letters, to her confessor, her cousin of Guise, and the King of France, occupied the first and longest portion. The

second she gave to exercises of devotion. In the retirement of her closet, with her two maids, Jane Kennedy and Elspeth Curle, she prayed and read alternately, and sought for support and consolation in the lecture of the passion of Christ, and of a sermon on the death of the penitent thief. About four she retired to rest ; but it was observed she did not sleep ; her lips were in constant motion, and her mind seemed absorbed in prayer.

At the break of day her household assembled around her. She read to them her will, distributed among them her clothes and money, and bade them adieu, kissing the women, and giving her hand to kiss to the men. Weeping they followed her into her oratory, where she took her place in front of the altar ; they knelt down and prayed behind her.

In the midst of the great hall of the castle had been raised a scaffold, covered with black serge, and surrounded with a low railing. About seven the doors were thrown open ; the gentlemen of the county entered with their attendants ; and Pawlett's guard augmented the number to between one hundred and fifty and two hundred spectators. Before eight a message was sent to the Queen, who replied that she would be ready in half an hour. At that time Andrews, the sheriff, entered the oratory : Mary arose, taking the crucifix from the altar in her right, and carrying her prayer-book in her left hand. Her servants were forbidden to follow ; they insisted ; but the Queen bade them be content, and turning gave them her blessing. They received it on their knees,

some kissing her hands, others her mouth. The door closed; and the burst of lamentation resounded through the hall.

Mary was now joined by the Earls of Kent and Shrewsbury and her keepers; and descending the staircase, found at the foot Melville, the steward of her household, who for several weeks had been excluded from her presence. This old and faithful servant threw himself on his knees, and wringing his hands exclaimed, "Oh, Madam, unhappy me! was ever man on earth the bearer of such sorrow as I shall be when I report that my good and gracious Queen and mistress was beheaded in England!" Here his grief impeded his utterance: and Mary replied, "Good Melville, cease to lament; thou hast rather cause to joy than mourn; for thou shalt see the end of Mary Stuart's troubles. Know that this world is but vanity, subject to more sorrow than an ocean of tears can bewail. But, I pray thee, report that I die a true woman to my religion, to Scotland, and to France. May God forgive them that have long thirsted for my blood as the hart doth for the brooks of water! Oh God, thou art the author of truth, and truth itself, thou knowest the inward chamber of my thoughts, and that I always wished the union of England and Scotland. Commend me to my son; and tell him that I have done nothing prejudicial to the dignity or independence of his crown, or favourable to the pretended superiority of our enemies." Then bursting into tears she said, "Good Melville, farewell!" and kissing him, "once again, good Melville, farewell! and pray for thy mistress and Queen."

It was remarked, as something extraordinary, that this was the first time in her life that she had ever been known to address a person by the pronoun thou.

Drying up her tears, she turned from Melville, and made her last request, that her servants might be present at her death. But the Earl of Kent objected, that they would be troublesome by their grief and lamentations, might practise some superstitious trumpery, perhaps might dip their handkerchiefs in her Grace's blood. "My Lords," said Mary, "I will give my word for them, they shall deserve no blame. Certainly your mistress, being a maiden Queen, will vouchsafe, in regard of womanhood, that I have some of my own women about me at my death." Receiving no answer, she continued, "You might, I think, grant me a far greater courtesy, were I a woman of lesser note than the Queen of Scots." Still they were silent; when she asked, with vehemence, "Am I not cousin of your Queen, a descendant of the blood royal of Henry VII., a married Queen of France, and the anointed Queen of Scotland?" At these words the fanaticism of the Earl of Kent began to yield; and it was resolved to admit four of her men and two of her women servants. She selected her steward, physician, apothecary, and surgeon, with her maids Kennedy and Curle.

The procession now set forward. It was headed by the sheriff and his officers; next followed Pawlett and Drury, and the Earls of Shrewsbury and Kent; and lastly came the Scottish Queen with Melville bearing her train. She wore the richest of her dresses, that

which was appropriate to the rank of a queen-dowager. Her step was firm, and her countenance cheerful. She bore without shrinking the gaze of the spectators, and the sight of the scaffold, the block, and the executioner; and advanced into the hall with that grace and majesty which she had so often displayed in her happier days, and in the palace of her fathers. To aid her as she mounted the scaffold, Pawlett offered his arm. "I thank you, sir," said Mary; "it is the last trouble I shall give you, and the most acceptable service you have ever rendered me.

The Queen seated herself on a stool which was prepared for her. On her right stood the two earls; on her left the sheriff, and Beale, the clerk of the Council; in front the executioner from the Tower, in a suit of black velvet, with his assistant also clad in black. The warrant was then read, and Mary in an audible voice addressed the assembly. She would have them recollect, she said, that she was a sovereign princess, not subject to the Parliament of England, but brought there to suffer by injustice and violence. She, however, thanked her God that he had given her this opportunity of publicly professing her religion, and of declaring, as she had often before declared, that she had never imagined, nor compassed, nor consented to, the death of the English Queen, nor ever sought the least harm to her person. After her death many things, which were then buried in darkness, would come to light. But she pardoned from her heart all her enemies, nor should her tongue utter that which *might* turn to their prejudice. Here she was inter-

rupted by Dr. Hatcher, Dean of Peterborough, who, having caught her eye, began to preach, and under that cover, perhaps through motives of zeal, contrived to insult the feelings of the unfortunate sufferer. He told her that his mistress, though compelled to execute justice on her body, was careful of the welfare of her soul : that she had sent him to bring her to the true fold of Christ, out of the communion of that Church, in which, if she remained, she must be damned : that she might yet find mercy before God if she would repent of her wickedness, acknowledge the justice of her punishment, and profess her gratitude for the favours which she had received from Elizabeth. Mary repeatedly desired him not to trouble himself and her. He persisted ; she turned aside. He made the circuit of the scaffold, and again addressed her in front. An end was put to this extraordinary scene by the Earl of Shrewsbury, who ordered him to pray. His prayer was the echo of his sermon ; but Mary heard him not. She was employed at the time in her devotions, repeating with a loud voice, and in the Latin language, long passages from the book of Psalms. When he had done, she prayed in English for Christ's afflicted church, for her son James, and for Queen Elizabeth. At the conclusion, holding up the crucifix, she exclaimed, " As thy arms, O God, were stretched out upon the cross, so receive me into the arms of thy mercy, and forgive me my sins." " Madam," said the Earl of Kent, " you had better leave such Popish trumperies, and bear him in your heart." She replied, " I cannot hold in my hand

the representation of his sufferings, but I must at the same time bear him in my heart."

When her maids, bathed in tears, began to disrobe their mistress, the executioners, fearing to lose their usual perquisite, hastily interfered. The Queen remonstrated; but instantly submitted to their rudeness, observing to the earls with a smile, that she was not accustomed to employ such grooms, or to undress in the presence of so numerous a company. Her servants, at the sight of their sovereign in this lamentable state, could not suppress their feelings: but Mary, putting her finger to her lips, commanded silence, gave them her blessing, and solicited their prayers. She then seated herself again. Kennedy taking a handkerchief edged with gold, pinned it over her eyes; the executioners, holding her by the arms, led her to the block; and the Queen, kneeling down, said repeatedly with a firm voice, "Unto thy hands, O Lord, I commend my spirit." But the sobs and groans of the spectators disconcerted the headsman. He trembled, missed his aim, and inflicted a deep wound in the lower part of the skull. The Queen remained motionless, and at the third stroke her head was severed from her body. When the executioner held it up, the muscles of the face were so strongly convulsed that the features could not be recognized. He cried, as usual, "God save Queen Elizabeth." "So perish all her enemies!" subjoined the Dean of Peterborough. "So perish all the enemies of the Gospel!" exclaimed, in a still louder tone, the fanatical Earl of Kent. Not a voice was heard to cry "Amen." Party feeling was *absorbed* in admiration and pity.

We have to turn from this horrid spectacle to behold the behaviour of King James of Scotland on hearing of what had taken place. His ambassadors had returned from England, on the day before the Queen was executed, bringing intelligence of their utter failure in procuring any promise from Elizabeth for his mother's safety, though without giving him to understand that her death was to be considered as resolved on. The King was sincerely afflicted at the issue of his negotiations; yet it was in vain for him to think of preventing the catastrophe by means of force. Himself a Protestant sovereign, existing as such only by the permission of his subjects, unable to raise a single battalion which would have followed him across the Borders on such an errand, threatened, even if he had, with an English army ready to oppose him under Lord Scroope, what could he attempt in that way with the least chance of success? So far from being able to take any such measures, he was unable to induce the clergy of his own capital to offer up a prayer of *one sentence* in behalf of his unfortunate parent. It is even known as a fact that some of the more influential of his nobility wrote to Elizabeth, encouraging her to take the proposed step. The truth is, James might mourn for his mother himself, and feel shocked at such a violation of his dignity as was implied by her being brought to the death of a criminal; but his feelings were not at all participated by his subjects. The spirit which caused her expulsion from Scotland still existed, and induced them to believe her sufferings and death as only an indirect judgment of heaven for her Catholicism and her supposed crimes.

All that James could do, therefore, was simply to remain in hope that Elizabeth would not proceed to the last extremity against his mother. So firmly did he trust to this, that he went on the 17th of the month to the hunting, though a rumour had already reached him of the fatal catastrophe. On the 20th, the news burst in all their reality upon his mind, when a messenger informed him that Sir Robert Carey, an English envoy, was waiting at Berwick for permission to enter Scotland, in order that he might apologise to his Majesty for the "unhappy accident"—so it was termed—which had taken place. James immediately retired to bed without food, that he might indulge his grief, and next morning he betook himself to a country palace for the same purpose. Carey he forbade to enter Scotland on such an errand.

It was not for some little time that the Scottish monarch could be brought to listen to Elizabeth's excuses. They turned out to be of a piece with her juggling conduct before the execution. She threw all the blame upon Secretary Davison, who, she said, had misinterpreted her wishes as to the forwarding of the warrant; and Carey was instructed to describe her as being personally so much moved by grief for the deplorable mistake, that she was rather a fit object for the pity of the King of Scots than for his anger. With this ludicrous apology, and some hints of future favour, together with a representation of the advantages he gained by being a step nearer to the English crown, James was obliged to be content.

When all resentment on this score was at an end,

James quietly resumed his habitual character as an ally and *protégé* of Elizabeth—the more bent, indeed, upon acting implicitly by her wishes, that he was now more certain than ever of the succession to her crown. Thus, when the Spanish Armada next year swept along the shores of England, James held himself in readiness to contribute all the assistance in his power to repel any invasion, and took very sharp measures with certain of his Catholic nobility, who had entered into engagements with Spain for the purpose of assisting the views of that Court in the event of a landing being effected in Scotland. The fate of this magnificent fleet was soon decided. Partly harassed by the attacks of the English vessels, but more injured by a violent storm which assailed it as soon as it approached the land, it was entirely dispersed, without debarking a single enemy on the British coast. A number of the vessels were wrecked amidst the western and northern islands of Scotland, where the crews were glad to receive the least hospitality from those whom they had come to destroy. The great armament which had been designed by human frailty to overturn the Protestant religion, and make all Christendom again uniform in faith, seemed to have actually been blasted by the hand of the Almighty, as a punishment for the presumptuousness of the undertaking.

King James was now advanced to the age of twenty-two years, and it seemed advisable that he should be provided with a consort. There were various good reasons for his taking such a step. The next heir to the Scottish crown (the Earl of Arran) was a lunatic;

by possessing children, the King was likely to become more acceptable to the English nation as their eventual ruler ; on the same account, there could be less temptation to assassinate him—a fate of which he always stood in fear from the Catholics, who, he thought, might thereby seek to cut off the succession of a Protestant family to the English throne : a wife was also calculated, as in private life, to increase the personal respectability of the monarch. Actuated by these views, James cast his thoughts upon the eldest daughter of the King of Denmark, who, as a Protestant princess, and of a kingdom little superior to his own in the list of European states, seemed an eligible match.

As it had been all along the policy of Queen Elizabeth to keep her heir-presumptive in a weak condition, and prevent his becoming popular in England, she had exactly the same reasons against James's marriage which disposed him to wish for it. She therefore employed all her art to impede his negotiations, in which she was at length so successful that the Danish King conceived himself insulted, and gave his daughter to the Duke of Brunswick. James was then roused to an exertion of self-will, such as he never had exhibited before. He compelled his minister, Maitland of Thirlstane, who was always under the control of Elizabeth, to act for once according to the will of his nominal master, and despatch a plenipotentiary for Denmark to ask the second daughter of the King, and conclude the match on any reasonable terms. This was successful, and in the summer of 1589, the Princess Anne

set sail for Scotland. Unfortunately she was driven back by a storm to her own country, and compelled to give up all hopes of sailing for Scotland till next season.

James then made a still more spirited exertion, insomuch as to prove that even the most sluggish minds may be roused by love. He left his country in charge of a body of privy councillors, and took a romantic voyage with a small train to Norway, where his bride was lying. There he celebrated his marriage in the best style; and afterwards, upon invitation, proceeded to Chronenburg, the palace of the King of Denmark, where he was received in the most flattering manner. After a residence of some months in this country, during which he engaged very deeply in drinking with the northern compotators, he returned with his wife to Scotland, May, 1590.

It happened that this homeward voyage was not undisturbed by storms. James soon after detected a band of witches in East Lothian, who, by the confession of some of their number, had put the elements into confusion, through the influence of incantations and sorcery, for the purpose of preventing the royal pair from reaching Scotland. Their confessions involved Francis Stuart, Earl of Bothwell, a nephew of the infamous husband of Queen Mary, and cousin to the King, who, it appeared, had engaged them to destroy his majesty's life, or at least prevent all fruit of his marriage, by their infamous arts, so as to admit of Bothwell's having a chance to succeed to the crown. The earl was for this apprehended and con-

fined in Edinburgh Castle; and some of the witches were burnt at a stake, according to the custom of Scotland in such cases. James felt much interested in the discovery of so strange a plot against his life, and was induced by his anxiety to attend all the examinations of the witches. From the materials furnished by their confessions, he afterwards compiled a speculative treatise on witchcraft, which is found in his works under the title of "*Dæmonologie*."

We have hitherto made but little allusion to the personal character of this monarch, his style of living, or the way in which his government was conducted. The deficiency must now be supplied.

It is, then, impossible to conceive a weaker government in the hands of a weaker man, than that of Scotland in the hands of James the Sixth. From some constitutional defect in the King, he was found, on growing up, to have weak nerves, and a corresponding degree of that mental quality which is called timidity. Good-natured, prone to grotesque humour and familiarity, rendered by learning rather pedantic than intelligent, James altogether made up a character the most remote possible from our idea of royal dignity, and certainly by no means qualified to conduct a kingdom of so unruly a nature as Scotland. It happened, indeed, that just at the time when the Scottish monarchy had been nearly laid in ruins by a civil war in which the nobles and people were successful, there succeeded to it a child who seemed destined to be scarcely ever any thing else. As this person grew up, he could hardly, even by the utmost efforts of such

unpopular ministers as Arran, obtain the least share of power from the confederated bodies (nobility and clergy), who had so long engrossed it. During his mature years, therefore, as well as under the regencies, Scotland was in reality but a province of England; a small country, managed upon Protestant principles, under the guidance of Elizabeth, with the appearance, it is true, of a king of its own, but who was only a vassal of the English queen—a person whom she kept in that condition, not so much, perhaps, for the sake of any positive good he could do to her in the grand cause of maintaining her throne against the Catholics, as merely that Scotland might not become a landing-place for them in any of their designs against her.

If this was James's political condition, his personal circumstances were even more deplorable. By his magnificent predecessors, James IV. and V. who lived at a time when the crown was wealthy, he had been left a series of palaces dispersed over the more civilised district of Scotland—Holyrood-house, Linlithgow, Stirling, Dunfermline, and Falkland—which might have done credit to a richer state than Scotland. But so dilapidated were his revenues, and so difficult was it to raise contributions among his subjects, that he was frequently unable to furnish one of these houses with a good dinner for himself and his queen. Almost the only income he could depend upon was the pension granted him by Queen Elizabeth, which only amounted to five thousand pounds. When he was on the point of sailing to Denmark to

meet his bride, we find him in such necessitous circumstances, as to be obliged to one or two private individuals for the furnishing of a little vessel in which he might make the voyage. At his return, he is found writing a most humble letter to a gentleman in Ayrshire, for the use of his chariot to transport the queen on some short progress. Letters are extant, written in the hand of this monarch, and addressed to the *lairds* near his palace, in which he begs for a few hens and geese to furnish forth his marriage table. But perhaps the most ludicrous trait of his poverty upon record, is one which represents him as sending to the Earl of Mar, at a great distance, for the loan of a pair of silk stockings, in which he might make a decent appearance before the Spanish ambassador.

While a man of stronger mind would have either rescued some share of authority from his people, or been deposed for the attempt, James was not altogether without his writhings and his struggles. With the nobility, for instance, he had the following mode of action. Being destitute of a standing army, or even a guard, to bring them to justice for any offence, he used to engage the unruly passions of some feudal enemy against them, and thus get them suppressed, at the expense of sowing the seeds of a thousand future broils. His general feelings, however, were friendly towards the nobility; and it was with the clergy that his chief struggles took place.

Owing to the peculiar circumstances of the country at the time of the Reformation, a great deal of undefined power and influence had fallen to the share of

the clergy. The leading cause seems to be, that as the political and military affairs of the last thirty years had all had reference to the establishment of the Protestant faith, it was natural for men to look to the ministers of that faith with a degree of respect much above what is merely due to the priestly character, and to deposit, as it were, the whole interest of the state in their hands. Another reason was, that the clergy, by casting from them all thoughts of pecuniary emolument, and devoting themselves in an apparently disinterested manner to the business of establishing their doctrines, had impressed a high sense of their unworldly dispositions upon men in general, and were paid by their flocks in homage and respect what could not be rendered to them in coin. The result of all this was, that the Scottish clergy, untrammelled by any gradation of dignities, formed themselves into a kind of republic within the kingdom, and, in their collective character as a General Assembly, exercised a power of no small dimensions. The worst feature of their system was, that, though interfering with every secular affair under their eyes, from the appointment of an officer of state or the negotiation of a national treaty, down to the meanest household arrangement in the families which composed their flocks, they denied all right in the king, or any other civil magistrate, to call them to account for word or action, professing only to be amenable to their own courts—where, of course, every thing they did was interpreted in their favour—or to Christ, the head of

their church, who, being invisible, was a merely ideal judge. King James, at various periods, endeavoured to introduce a certain civil control into this powerful body, or to reduce them into an episcopal form, whereby he might have had responsible dignitaries to answer for the conduct of the lower members ; but he did not meet with the least success for some years after this period, when at length the near prospect of his accession to England gave him so much power in his own country as to enable him, to a certain extent, to break their spirit. At the time now under notice there were several ministers in Edinburgh and other parts of the kingdom, who, though perhaps enjoying incomes of only fifteen or twenty pounds a year, had more real influence over the people than Majesty itself.

Notwithstanding that the *executive* was kept in this miserable condition, it would appear that the country still pressed forward to wealth and intelligence. Of course, to compare Scotland at the same period to England, would only be ridiculous ; yet, though after a long interval, it still *did* advance. In the department of learning, Scotland possessed four universities, at which a good education was to be obtained at a moderate charge. Almost every town, moreover, had a good school, diffusing knowledge in smaller, but not less useful channels. And these institutions, it may be remarked, were attended by the children of Highland and other remote proprietors, who, in the time of James IV., a century before, had had no such means of enlightenment. In point of literature, or as it may be

called, the production of books, Scotland was steadily advancing, though as yet she had neither divines nor poets equal to those who adorned the reign of Queen Elizabeth. Printing, which was introduced in 1508 by two merchants of Edinburgh acting in partnership, was now practised by a number of persons in the same city, and had extended to Glasgow and St. Andrew's; though it cannot be observed that there was any individual in the country carrying on exclusively the business of a bookseller. Commerce had certainly become much extended in Scotland during the last fifty years; and consequently the towns were getting wealthier than they had been. When Anne of Denmark entered Edinburgh, as wife of James VI., the corporation presented her with jewels to the amount of twenty thousand crowns. In Fife there was a chain of little sea-ports along the coast, which carried on a very considerable trade with the adjacent countries of Europe. This was the era of the introduction of manufactures into Aberdeen. Now, moreover, for the first time, did any trading men acquire what are called *fortunes* in Scotland; a number of instances are observable in Edinburgh. It was no doubt upon a small scale as compared with England, but still, as every thing is comparative, the fact must be held as indicating improved circumstances in general. More than one Scottish nobleman, and a considerable number of gentry, trace back their origin to wealthy merchants of this epoch.—With regard to moral culture, Scotland was by no means in a backward state. It is to be observed, that although the violent passions of the upper classes, and the weak

state of the government, occasionally produced dreadful tragedies in the country, the people at large were, nevertheless, in general virtuous. Crimes in this age, as is evident from the books of justiciary, were confined almost solely to the rich and great; the poor were stigmatised with no habitual crime except the supposed one of witchcraft, which chiefly affected the class of old women. The truth is, that in addition to all considerations as to the deep-rooted prudence and good feeling of the Scottish nation, the religious culture of the age was almost enough to hold their evil passions in check. It is to be remarked, for instance, regarding the murders and other wicked actions which occasionally took place among the better orders, that there was invariably a strong expression of public indignation among the people, something indeed very nearly approaching to the censure with which public sentiment visits bad actions in our own enlightened times. Then, as well as now, natural feeling rose indignant at a tale of blood, of oppression, or of the violation of any thing which was generally esteemed sacred; and this spirit, under the direction of the preachers, often exercised an influence over the government. There are also to be found in the private memoirs of the time, characters of men in the superior stations of society who exercised almost every Christian virtue, and would have adorned any age. The very vices of the period—revenge, and the necessity of taking side with a friend whether right or wrong—were only the excesses of certain virtues. As the merchants of the age were necessitated to have staunch

on their windows to protect their goods from spolia-
tion, and sometimes were under the necessity of carry-
ing their whole collective wealth to a *bastile*, or for-
tified town-house, where they had to defend it with
arms from domestic enemies; so were men found to
have still a strain of the old rudeness of their country
pervading even the best of their qualities, if it were for
nothing but self-defence. The dagger hung beside
the ink-horn, as a matter of attire, from the girdles of
even the most peaceful professional men, and was con-
sidered as indispensable.

CHAPTER XIV.

REIGN OF JAMES VI. TO THE UNION OF THE
CROWNS.

BOTHWELL resented his confinement in Edinburgh Castle very deeply ; for it was at that time the curse of Scotland that justice never appeared in its own shape, but could only be inflicted under the invidious guise of a victory over the guilty person, gained by a feudal or political enemy. This nobleman therefore shut his eyes entirely to his real guilt, as a thing that had nothing to do with his confinement ; in his own conceit he was only an unfortunate courtier at the ban of his enemy the Lord Chancellor Maitland. He even believed that if he only could gain the King's ear, and keep up his person for a little while from Maitland, he should become the principal courtier, as he had hoped to be before.

He contrived to escape from confinement, and went to his own estates to endeavour to raise his followers. The Chancellor caused sentence of forfeiture and outlawry to be pronounced against him. Suddenly, Bothwell approached one of the gates of the city with sixteen horse, and there being no force at the command of either King or Chancellor to oppose him, he was permitted to defy the whole power of the government

with impunity. Throwing a forty shilling piece upon the ground, he protested in the face of the city that he was a rebel to the Chancellor only, and not to the King ; and he said he would give that sum to any one who should bring forth Maitland from the city. The citizens kept within their walls, and were glad when he turned to depart.

He was not so successful on a second appearance near Edinburgh, October 1591. The King, being then better provided, no sooner learned that Bothwell was in the neighbourhood than he went out in person with some friends, and compelled him to fly. Two months after, December 27, he was introduced by treachery, under cloud of night, into the King's palace of Holyroodhouse ; intending, no doubt, to displace the Chancellor, and remain in possession of the royal person. But for a premature outcry, which was raised by some of his coadjutors, he would have found the King undressed in his chamber. James, fortunately, got the alarm ; ran down the back-stairs, in a condition little short of nudity, and throwing himself into a tower which was capable of defence, eluded the hands of the traitor. Maitland also had time to bar his doors, and make himself safe. Bothwell was then obliged to retire for fear of being counter-surprised by the citizens, who were beginning to flock to the King's assistance.

Out of this affair arose the very unfortunate murder of a young nobleman, son-in-law and heir to the Regent Murray. This person, besides being distinguished for his extreme handsomeness, was a noted leader of

the wilder denomination of the clergy ; for both which reasons he was highly popular. The party spirit which had placed the Earls of Murray and Huntly in opposition thirty years before, had descended to their heirs. The present Earl of Huntly and the existing Earl of Murray were rivals and enemies in the extreme degree. Murray had protected a culprit from justice in his castle of Tarnaway ; Huntly coming up to claim him in a judicial capacity, Murray gave fire from the battlements, and killed a clansman of his rival. The kindred of the deceased vowed vengeance, and Huntly, as the chief of the family, naturally became interested in seeing it executed. Moray soon after falling under suspicion of having been concerned with Bothwell, James thought proper, according to his usual system, to grant Huntly a commission to bring him to justice. On the night of the 8th of February, 1592, the Earl proceeded with a band of followers to seize his rival at Donibrissle House in Fife. On seeing a troop of Gordons at his door, the young nobleman of course took every precaution for his defence. On his refusing to yield himself, the Gordons set fire to the gate. Murray then held counsel with a friend, Dunbar, sheriff of Moray, who happened to be with him, and who was so generous as to propose that he should break through the flames first, and engage the attention of the enemy, while Murray might escape. This was done. Dunbar met the fate he scarcely hoped to avoid. Murray, taking advantage of the moment, broke through also, and had actually got to some distance unobserved. He took refuge amidst

the rocks on the neighbouring beach. Unfortunately, the strings of his head-piece had caught fire, and now hanging at his back gave forth a lurid glare through the darkness. Traced by this mark, he was cut down without resistance by Gordon of Buckie, a fierce clansman of Huntly. The dying Earl, mindful even in that situation of his superior beauty, collected his strength to murmur forth indignantly, "You have spoilt a better face than your own," and was instantly a corpse. It is said that, in accordance with a custom which has already been more than once alluded to as characteristic of Scotland, the murderer compelled his chief to approach and give a wound to the body with his sword, by way of pledging himself as party to the deed. The King was brought into great perplexity by this transaction, which the Presbyterians in general attributed to his own jealousy of their darling leader. Strange as it may appear, he was compelled, in order to appease them and restore himself to the public approbation, to give sanction in Parliament to the establishment of their system of church-government, which continued for a time. As for the punishment of the real murderers, that was a thing altogether beyond his power.

There is the greatest reason to believe that Queen Elizabeth very soon caught up the idea of giving some encouragement to Bothwell, as a good means of keeping James in check. With some borderers, whom he must have raised partly through her influence, he made a second attack upon the King at the palace of Falkland, June 26, 1592. Success did not attend the

enterprise. James, apprised of his approach, locked the gates, and stood to his defence. The turbulent Earl was compelled to retire, and, in his retreat to the border, lost many of his men.

The public was now entertained with an amusement very much to its taste, and which it seldom wanted for any great length of time,—a Catholic conspiracy. A gentleman, seized in the act of quitting the country, was found to have upon his person a few blank letters addressed to the King of Spain, and subscribed with the names of the Earls of Huntly, Angus, and Errol, who were all Catholics. There was evidently no treason here: the papers contained only one name at the beginning and another at the end. It was just in this, however, that the grand cause of excitement lay. Had the letters been filled up, and found to contain the plan of a new Spanish armada, that would have been a definite source of terror: the mind would have rested there and been content. But letters which contained nothing but blank space, and which every man was at liberty to fill up as his fancy dictated; that, indeed, was a very different matter! Such a vague outline of a plot, left to be filled up with the teeming terrors of a Protestant imagination, amounted to something fit to shake empires to their bases. Broad Scotland raved, to the extremity of its remotest peninsula, with the horrors of this conspiracy of three sheets of paper.

James's policy regarding the Catholics was to keep them in as friendly a state towards himself as might be consistent with his profession of another religion.

He wished to conciliate the powers abroad, that they might not oppose his right of succession to the crown of England; and he abstained from every sort of persecution of those unfortunate religionists at home, except such as his Protestant subjects compelled him to inflict, in order to balance them off against his tyrannical friends, the Presbyterians. In the present case, knowing very well that the nobles who appeared concerned in this blank plot were only anxious to secure some share of toleration by the influence of the King of Spain, he was little disposed to go into all the demands of his people regarding them. Such, however, was the excited state of the public mind, that it was not till he had gratified it with a massacre of Highlanders at the battle of Glenlivet, that it could be altogether quieted. This encounter between the retainers of the persecuted Catholics, and a feudal enemy sent to exterminate them, took place on the 3d of October 1594, and, like the shedding of blood upon the path of the sleuth-hound, had the effect of staunching the appetites of the clergy for vengeance against their opponents. It was nominally a victory to the Catholic nobles, but had the effect of destroying their power, and compelling them to go to banishment.

On the 19th of February 1594, James was gratified by the birth of a male heir at Stirling Castle; an event that added greatly to his merit as heir-presumptive of England, and contributed not a little to his personal security. This young prince, who was baptised Henry, promised, by his extraordinary qualities of

mind and temper to be an excellent sovereign ; but he was cut off by natural disease in the nineteenth year of his age, leaving the succession to his next brother Charles, who was born some years later.

To pursue the story of Bothwell : he contrived at length to form a party in the Court against the Chancellor. Being admitted, by the treachery of those persons, into the King's presence, July 23, 1593, he obtained what he had so long wished, the possession of the royal person, and seemed for a little time to be the reigning adviser of Majesty. James, however, was too seriously disgusted with his officious friend to endure him long : by a sudden shift of place, the King got clear of his influence, and, with the support of his subjects, placed the pestilent noble once more at the mercy of the law. An open rebellion was the consequence ; the clergy had a leaning to his cause, for no observable reason except that he was an enemy of government like themselves ; and he contrived to make a good appearance on the field. James, however, was enabled by Lord Hume, a Catholic noble of high family influence, to bring something like an army to oppose him. The parties had several meetings, but no serious rencounter, the King on all occasions going forth in person to animate his troops. Bothwell was at last obliged, by the increasing strength of the King, to abandon his enterprise and quit the country. He died abroad in great obscurity, leaving a son, who never was able to recover from the effects of his father's follies. A grandson rode as a common trooper in the regiment of Life-Guards, which was

raised in Scotland during the reign of Charles II., since named the Scots Greys.*

It has been mentioned that the Scottish Presbyterians obtained the establishment of their republican form of church polity in 1592, in consequence of the weakness to which the King was at that time reduced by the odium of the murder of the Earl of Murray. James, who had ever since been writhing under the dominion thus imposed upon him, was now most anxious, if possible, to introduce a moderate system of Episcopacy, by which he might secure a little obedience from this branch of his subjects. Their imprudence supplied him with an opportunity.

The year 1596 saw the King unannoyed, almost for the first time in his life, with any public enemy or rebel. Bothwell was now banished; the Catholic Lords had returned to restore the balance against the Presbyterians; Queen Elizabeth was waxing infirm, and promised soon to demit her sceptre to King James; in the prospect of this splendid inheritance many men came to his Majesty's side, who had before kept at a distance, or actually opposed him; the very witches ceased for a while to give the royal mind any alarm—as if the powers of darkness had at length found him too much for them, and resolved to give up the contest with a man who was not only able to punish them

* The present flourishing and peaceful family of Buccleuch has had the fortune to be connected with the royal family through two specimens of turbulent illegitimacy, Bothwell and Monmouth. Sir Walter Scott, of Buccleugh, married a daughter of the former, and through her the family enjoy, or have enjoyed, a great part of his estates.

with fire, but publish their misdoings in paper and print. This was a state of things calculated to give the clergy great uneasiness. The country at peace; the government beginning to make itself be felt among the people; Queen Elizabeth drawing near death; and the witches either all burnt out, or conciliated to the royal cause: it was impossible that King James could long enjoy these advantages without beginning to think of some design for abridging the power of the church.

The quarrel was precipitated by a clergyman at St. Andrew's, who one day preached a seditious sermon, in which he characterised kings and queens as the children of the devil. James made an attempt to bring this person before his privy council. The church, in all its pretended infallibility, quickly stood forward to protect its member. He was instructed to decline and defy the authority of the council to judge of his case, for it was only, they said, competent to the General Assembly to try an offence committed in a sacred function. James insisted that sedition was a secular crime, and therefore liable, whether in clergyman or layman, to be tried by a secular court. But it did not suit the views of this body to allow such a doctrine. The consequence was, that, as the King persisted with some degree of firmness upon his right of examining the offender, the church was thrown into a state little short of open rebellion; in which a great part of the people, and some of the nobility, joined them. They at length proceeded to such a pitch of audacity as to hold systematic meetings in Edinburgh and elsewhere, for the advancement of their interests,

as if they had been inclined to establish a government entirely distinct from that of King James.

On the 17th of December, 1596, the King was sitting in the court of justice at Edinburgh, when a great body of nobles, clergy, and people, met together in a church only divided from that place by a partition wall, and made up a petition, in which they remonstrated with much freedom against his late proceedings. While two or three of their number were presenting this to him, a preacher regaled those who remained in the church with a violent sermon, in which the story of Haman was somehow or other tortured into an application to the present circumstances. As they were tingling in every nerve with this exciting theme, some one who felt amused at their ridiculous state of alarm, cried in at the door, "Fly, save yourselves!" which in a moment caused the whole assemblage to rise and rush tumultuously from the church, under an apprehension that the royal power was about to fall upon them in the shape of a file of soldiers. Immediately, the phenomenon of a crowd fighting without an enemy took place upon the street. Men rushed hither and thither, brandishing their weapons, and crying, "The sword of the Lord and of Gideon!" Others crowded round the door of the court in which the King sat, crying, "Bring out the wicked Haman!" To the surprise of all, no enemy appeared. The King waited till the effervescence subsided, and then went home to his palace, guarded by the magistrates. An overt act of treason like this was calculated to place the fortunes of the church

the disposal of the King : for it caused the good sense of all unprejudiced persons to rise in his favour, and made it seem reasonable that he should take sharp measures with the clergy. He had only to make a good handle of it, to tame the pride of this imperious body, and cause them to accept of a gradation of dignitaries. Henceforth the church continued more or less episcopal in its government, till the breaking out of the civil war in 1638.

From this period to 1600, neither the history of the country nor the life of the King furnishes any incident of note. It was a quiet time of expectation, in which the royal faculties were entirely subdued by the pleasing prospect of the death of Elizabeth, who was now approaching her seventieth year. James spent the most of his leisure time in his favourite sport of buck-hunting, which was plentifully supplied to him by the royal park at Falkland. The public mind in Scotland, agitated for centuries by ideas of hostility against England, at length rested in the tranquil hope of a permanent alliance with that country under one sovereign, an alliance to which community of religion had done much during the last forty years to dispose them.

At length, in August 1600, the unusual stillness was suddenly broken in upon by the famous Gowry conspiracy. The reader will easily bring to mind the execution of the first bearer of this title in 1584, for his concern in the affair of Ruthven. Since then the family had been restored by the King's grace to its estates and titles ; and Earl John, son of the beheaded *Earl*, was just returned from the university of Padua,

where he had been completing his education. This young nobleman is said to have been gifted with uncommon elegance of person ; but it is evident that his mind was tainted with most of the foibles of the age. He cherished some absurd notions which had been inspired into him by Italian conjurors, regarding the exaltation of his fortunes in Scotland, and he entertained a dark sentiment of revenge against the King, for his Majesty's concern in the death of his father. Upon the whole, he was an ambitious, vain, conceited young man, who seems to have thought that he could do any thing that he chose to apply himself to, even though it concerned the throne of the realm.

Soon after his return to Scotland, which took place in the spring of 1600, the Earl appears to have conceived the notion of playing a similar game with the King to that which was played by his father at Ruthven ; namely, an attempt to get possession of his person, and direct the government in his name. His chief confederate in this scheme was his next brother, Alexander Ruthven ; no other can be traced except an old baron, Logan of Restalrig, who resided in a cliff-built fortress called Fastcastle, on the coast of Berwickshire. The circumstances which appear in evidence are as follow :—

Early in the morning of the 5th of August, as the King was leaving his palace of Falkland to go to the buck-hunting, Mr. Alexander Ruthven came up to him, and told a long confused story about a suspicious-looking person whom he had taken into custody the night before, and confined in his brother's house at

Perth. As this person carried a pot of broad gold pieces under his cloak, Ruthven said he had suspected him of being an emissary of some Catholic sovereign, commissioned to raise a new rebellion; and he therefore requested his Majesty to ride to Perth, and examine him in person; in which case the gold would fall to the royal exchequer, instead of being appropriated by any inferior magistrates.

Partly from curiosity, partly from a desire of securing the gold, but yet not altogether satisfied as to the feasibility of the tale, James consented to accompany Ruthven to Perth. After the hunt was done, he set out on horseback; followed, much against Ruthven's wish, by nearly a dozen of his courtiers. The party found the Earl of Gowry seated in his house at dinner, and to all appearance unaware of the approach of such a company. Preparations were hastily made for entertaining the King and his attendants.

After dinner, Alexander Ruthven hinted to the King that it was now time for them to go and examine the supposed emissary. James followed the young man through several apartments. Some of the courtiers rose to accompany his Majesty; but Ruthven kept them back, and locked a door to exclude them. At last, having led the King into a remote chamber, where only a man was seen standing in armour, Ruthven suddenly changed the demeanour of an obeisant courtier for that of an assassin, snatched a dagger from the girdle of the armed man, and presenting it to the King's breast, said, "Sir, you must be my prisoner; remember of my father's death!" James,

being totally unarmed, had no resource but to mollify the young man with fair words. He said that, as for the death of the late Earl of Gowry, it was done in his minority, when he had no power in the State. He reminded Ruthven of their friendship up to this hour. He asked what could be his object in such strange conduct. Ruthven said he only desired to exact a promise from his Majesty, and he should bring his brother to explain what it was. He then left the room, locking the door behind him; and James found himself alone with the man in armour, who had hitherto done nothing but tremble at the strange scene passing before his eyes.

This individual was a domestic of the Earl of Gowry, whom the two brothers had thrust in here for the purpose of assisting them in their design, but who, in reality, contrary to what might have been expected from a Scottish servant in that age, was by no means inclined to commit treason in his master's behalf. The King soon discovered this in conversation, and requested him to open one of the windows, which looked to the court-yard of the house. As the man was doing so, Alexander Ruthven came into the room, and, flying at the King, cried, "Sir, there is no remedy;" and began to bind the royal hands with a garter.

The Earl of Gowry was, meanwhile, playing his own part. Soon after James had retired with Ruthven, a servant suddenly entered to inform his lordship and the royal party, that the King was gone back to Falkland unattended. The courtiers, thinking of nothing but

some practical joke on the King's part, rushed out to the court-yard, and called for their horses, intending to ride after him. At that moment, a voice, as of one in the agonies of strangulation, was heard to cry from an upper window in the building, "Help, help, my lord of Mar, help! Treason! I am murdered;" and looking up, they saw a part of the King's face, flushed and terrified, at the window of a turret, while a hand grasping the royal throat was also partially seen. The greater part of the courtiers immediately rushed back into the house, and endeavoured to reach the place where the King was; Sir Thomas Erskine seized the the Earl of Gowry by the throat, exclaiming, "Traitor, this is thy deed!" Two or three rushed into a minor stair-case, which ascended to the turret, and which had been left open by the conspirators from mistake. One of those last, named John Ramsay, was the first to reach the royal presence. When he entered the chamber, he found the King and his assassin griping each other on the floor, the latter endeavouring all he could to draw his sword in order to despatch the King, while the other struggled with all his might to hold his hand. As for the man in armour, who had hitherto stood in a fit of trepidation, unable either to assist his master or defend the King, he now glided from the apartment. Ramsay instantly drew his sword, and inflicted a stab upon Ruthven's neck. The young man relaxed his gripe; and the King pushed him down the stair-case, where he was met and killed by other courtiers now ascending to his *Majesty's* rescue.

Gowry, who had soon shaken himself loose from the gripe of Sir Thomas Erskine, gathered seven of his servants, and drawing a pair of swords, which he was in the habit of wearing in one sheath, rushed also up this stair-case. He found in the apartment only four friends of the King; for those who ascended by the main stair were impeded by a locked door. A fight took place, in which Ramsay had the good fortune to run the Earl through the body. His Lordship fell, and never spoke another word; the servants fled or surrendered. James, thrown into a transport of joy by the victory, knelt down in the bloody apartment, and with all his friends bending on their knees around him, returned thanks to God for his preservation. It is a further mark of his piety, that when he visited Scotland seventeen years after, he came to Perth on the anniversary of this remarkable day, introduced all his English courtiers into the same room, and, kneeling in the midst of them, renewed the prayer uttered on the present occasion.

The conclusion of this horrid tragedy was a process of forfeiture against the family of Ruthven, and an act for abolishing the use of the very name; whereby a fulfilment was certainly brought to the declaration of Queen Mary to Lord Ruthven, after Rizzio's death, that her offspring should yet avenge the insult then offered to her. King James caused the 5th of August to be observed as a holiday during the whole of his reign.

That reign, so far as Scotland was concerned in its separate capacity, was now drawing to a close. Eliza-

beth was observed, from about this period, to decline very fast. As she became more and more infirm, her courtiers turned their eyes with the greater anxiety to her successor. Even her most confidential favourites began at length to open a correspondence with King James, for the purpose of securing his favour. Among those were some who had assisted in the destruction of his mother ; he wisely smothered all resentment on that score. Cecil, the Queen's chief secretary, and the son of that very Lord Burleigh who was principally instrumental in decreeing the death of Mary, carried on a secret correspondence with James for several years before the death of his mistress, in order to smooth away all the difficulties of the succession, and at the same time fix himself in the affections of the future King of England. To this circumstance, perhaps, James was not a little indebted for his easy accession ; for he might have otherwise had to dispute his title with some descendant of Henry VII., who would present the advantage of having been born in England, as was required by an Act of Parliament formed by Henry VIII. for regulating the succession.

In the fulness of time, by the death of Elizabeth on the 24th of March 1603, the King of Scots became also King of England, whereby the wars that had so long desolated the two countries from a feeling of national rivalry, seemed to be set for ever at rest. James was apprised of the good news by the same messenger who had come sixteen years before to apologise for the death of his mother, namely, Sir *Robert Cary* ; who, in order to be first, performed the

journey from London to Edinburgh in three days and two nights. James, on the 5th of April, set out for London, attended by a gallant train of those Scottish counsellors who had been most faithful to him. As he advanced by leisurely journeys through England, he was every where received with the utmost joyfulness, the people being pleased with the novelty of a male sovereign, in addition to all other causes of satisfaction. He arrived at London, to take possession of the government of his new state, on the 22nd of May; and his family, now consisting of two sons and a daughter, soon after joined him.—With this incident ends the history of Scotland in its condition of a distinct kingdom.

END OF VOL. I.







